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[THE SUBTERFUGE.]

GRAND COURT.

BY THE

Author of "Sometimes Scyphire, Sometimes Pale," &c.

CHAPTER XXIX.

When o'er the barren moors the night wind howled,
And the deep thunders shook the ebon throne
Of the startled night! Henry Kirk White.

NEARER, and nearer came the red eye, glaring through the blackness and the misty rain. The brain of Hammond reeled, powerless even to cry out, his mouth bandaged, his limbs bound about with ropes; what could he do, but pray that the death which threatened him might be speedy, sudden, short, as it was dreadful, overwhelming, crushing? It was upon him now, the noise as of a great earthquake filled his ears, the ground vibrated under him, now, now! He closed his eyes—roar! rush! whirr! and behold the mighty engine, with its train of carriages was passing along side of him, and he was untouched! unharmed! Another moment and it was gone. Its screech sounded in his ears as it approached a station beyond. It was gone! gone! His eyes filled with tears, and his heart rose in thankfulness for his great deliverance.

The mystery of his safety did not long puzzle him; either by design, or accident, Chippenham and Co. had placed him on a different line to those over which the express and up-train passed, yet even so, it was little less than a miracle that he remained unhurt, for the block of wood to which he was bound protruded itself beyond the rails where it was placed, and might very easily have been caught by some portion of the ponderous machinery of the engine as it passed. He was safe so far, and he felt confident that merciful Providence had delivered him out of the hands of his enemies. Help would come now, he was convinced. He prayed long, earnestly, and patiently. It was a terrible trial, lying there, drenched by the rain, which began to fall in pitiless torrents, bound, gagged, helpless,

through long hours of wintry darkness. And once again, during that night of horror, Hammond was compelled to undergo the same awful uncertainty, the same fearful ordeal. Again the red monstrous eye appeared through the mist; again the earth vibrated with a whirl, and a rush, and a roar: the danger had passed, and he was left unhurt by iron, wheel, or cruel machinery. At last, oh! blessed change, the gray chill dawn awoke in the east, the brow of morning was sullen, like the brow of a pettish child, or a self-willed woman; but still it was the brow of the morning, and with it came hope to the heart of Hammond Danvers. The rain ceased, though the sky was low and threatening. The sun got up blood red. Hammond could only see the high banks on each side the cutting, and the railway bridge above.

All at once there appeared the head of a man over the bridge, a face wan and sad, young, handsome, worn, a face that Hammond knew. Ah! would he look down to the cutting? His eyes wandered amid the grand panorama of mountains, those mountains which poor Hammond could not see where he lay deep between the shelving banks. Then a cry and a shout burst from the lips of the young man on the bridge, he had perceived Hammond. Down he sprang, down with the speed of lightning, in less time than it takes to write the words. Hammond was dragged far out of reach of the rails, and was looking up gratefully into the white scared face of Philip Ruthven!

Ruthven hastily unfastened the knots of the thick handkerchief which the infamous Chippenham had wound about the mouth of Hammond, and took out a smaller one which the miscreant had stuffed into his mouth.

"Good Heaven!" said Philip, "how is this? My poor dear boy! Drenched to the skin, too!"

Hammond was a brave fellow. His limbs ached with cold; his head burnt with fever; he felt deadly sick and ill; but he tried to smile as he answered:

"I thought it was all up with me, Phil, old fellow, but you must not think me quite a fool, that I let

myself be treated so. Three ruffians, strong as prize fighters, set upon me, and they had a woman to hound them on."

"Why, how they have bound and tied these knots," cried Philip, in a low, savage tone; "and the rain has soaked it so, my dear boy, that I can't get it untied. I have my case of instruments in my pocket. Hurrah! what a lucky thing!"

He pulled out the case as he spoke, opened it, selected a sharp surgeon's knife, and after a little hacking and hewing of the ropes, Hammond stood a free man under the sullen December sky. He looked and felt fearfully ill, however. The exposure, the drenching rain, the cruel confinement of the ropes, his anxiety, excitement, and mental suffering, had conspired to throw him into a fever. Philip felt his pulse.

"My dear boy, you will be ill if you don't get a steam-bath within the next hour, and then you should get to bed, and drink hot tea with brandy in it."

"I must get back to Yauworth, to my Norah," said Hammond.

"Norah! How? Where? Is Viola with her?" asked Philip, his eyes burning with excitement.

In a few words Hammond gave Philip an account of the events of the last six weeks. He told him that Viola was at a school in Paris, conducted by the Demoiselles de la Harpe, in the Avenue des Pruniers, Champs Elysées, but he did not then distress the lover with the story of the illness of his beloved. He thought he looked miserable, and pinched, and sad enough, without his adding to his grief just then.

"I was told by that rascal Rokewood," said Philip, "that Viola was in France. On the night when he was taking Lady Norah to Peniston, I struggled with him in the carriage, and had the good luck to do some damage to his ugly face. Lady Norah warned me that it was his intention to give me in charge, on the pretence that I had robbed him, and I sprang from the carriage before the train reached the station. He really did set the police upon my track. I escaped him, got into a village near th

lakes by the next day, and there managed to buy some clothes and disguise myself. I had a double reason for this, which I will explain presently. I had very little money with me. I had left my portmanteau at that Midland station where I had seen the face of Norah, and had sprung to the steps of her carriage, and so been whirled away along another line of rail. I resolved to hide myself for a week or two, until the hue and cry was over. You know I have a talent for disguise, and consequently, with only my case of surgical instruments, a very few pounds, and my gold watch in my possession, I assumed the dress of a stonemason. Why, I will tell you first, how I went on towards Scotland. I read in the papers at the small inns where I put up for the night, and breakfasted in the morning, of the attempted robbery with violence by a medical student. The imputation was very damaging to me, not only as regards the professional career which I had begun to study for, but in other respects. Still, since a man wealthy, and in the grand position of Mr. Rokewood, having made the charge, I should have been thrown into prison had I attempted to return to clear my character and to refute his calumnies. Now I mean to arraign him one day or the other before the bar of my country for calumny," continued Philip, with a tremor in his voice and a flash in his eye, which spoke volumes of suppressed wrath; "but I could not spare the time just then; it was most important that I should gain possession of documents which—when they exist, will have a wonderful effect upon my whole life, will change every condition of it. I have hitherto had nothing but trial and disappointment. I have wished to find my way to Viola, to throw myself at her feet and entreat her to share the good fortune which should be mine, but I have not dared to write to her, my letter would only have fallen into the hands of her governess, and they would have communicated with the arch-demon Rokewood. I should have been discovered, so I have worn my disguise. I have even, Hammond do not despise me for it, earned bricklayers' wages to support my life, so that I might save my money and live unsuspected. See; I am in workman's clothes this morning. Last night I slept at a small farm whither I will return with you."

"I do not despise you," said Hammond. "Did not Alfred the Great learn many handicrafts? Did not Peter of Russia work as a ship's carpenter? Many kings and princes have donned disguises and done menial work, but I wish to get back to Yauworth."

"Impossible! Why you trouble. We can't get a conveyance here, and the village you speak of is ten miles across the mountains. There is no inn hereabouts, so you must just come down to the farm I speak of and let me doctor you, or you will be very ill, I am afraid."

Hammond indeed was obliged to lean upon the arm of Philip for support, and thus the two wound their way down to the small, low-roofed farm below the level of the road.

"Mrs. Jones," he said; "this gentleman has been exposed to all the rain of last night, and is too ill to walk to the inn. Will you let him have a bed, a fire, a breakfast? I will pay, or rather he will pay, whatever you like to ask."

"Poor young gentleman," cried the farmer's wife, in tender, womanly tones; "walk in, if you please, gentlemen." This young woman had the instincts of a true gentlewoman. "Walk in and make yourselves at home."

"Mrs. Jones is a friend of mine," said Philip with a smile aside to Hammond. "She is the purest-minded creature in the world, but she has been educated above the station which she fills. She is not above it in the ordinary, vulgar sense, she is the most industrious woman, the most affectionate wife, but if she meets with people of a little refinement, people who have read and so on, the romantic side of her nature shows itself, her sympathies are roused. Go in and pull off your wet clothes. You will find the beds clean and soft and the blankets thick and warm. I have lodged twice with these farmers."

Across the large stone hall or "Hanse Place," as it is called in the Cumberland dialect, Ruthven led his friend. A table was spread with a plentiful breakfast, and a good looking, young farmer sat watching the kettle boil, while a rosy child climbed his knee. The window looked out into a fruit-garden bare and desolate under the December sky.

"Now, off with these wet clothes and into this warm bed," said Philip, assisting Hammond to wrap himself round in a thick blanket.

He heaped more upon him. Mrs. Jones came into the room and kindled a fire in the low grate. Hot, steaming tea, into which Philip poured some good brandy, was next administered to Hammond. He could eat nothing, though Mrs. Jones brought him hot cake, cold ham cured by herself, and other dainties to tempt him. Before long the young man sank into a deep sleep. Philip sat by his side watching him,

listening to his breathing, now and then feeling his pulse. That warmth and the gradual perspiration which came on him saved his life, or, at least, preserved him from a very severe illness. He awoke at about four o'clock in the afternoon, just as dusk was creeping over the hills. The first object upon which his eyes fell was Philip Ruthven, seated before the blazing fire in his nondescript dress, looking half-noble, half workman, his fine head bare, his white blouse unfastened at the throat, displaying the snowy collar and waistcoat of fine cloth. Philip was studying a book of medical science; he flung it down when Hammond called to him.

"Dear boy," he cried, "you will be all right now. 'Do you know, old fellow,' he continued, while he shook the hand of Hammond heartily, 'I was a little afraid about you this morning, but now you will be as right as a trivet or as snazepore or any other vulgar slang similitude which suits you.'

"Heaven bless you, Philip," said Hammond, dashing a tear from his eye. "You were sent to me like a good angel. I should not have known where to go or what to do. I should have attempted the long walk across the mountains and most likely have perished by the way. Your kind friends here have a lasting claim on my deepest gratitude, as great as the diabolical countess has upon my—"

"He paused a moment, set his white teeth, and grew pale with the intensity of his emotion. 'Upon my justice,' said Hammond. 'Depend upon it, I will measure out to her a goodly amount. I will be even with her satanic ladyship. I will pay her back in her own coin. You are my witness. You found me bound and gagged, lying upon the floor of rail.' Ruthven looked gloomily into the fire.

"Unhappy Ruthven!" he could only say, despairingly. "I cannot show myself yet. I am in hiding; the name of Philip Ruthven, the medical student, who attempted robbery with violence, is known at all the police-offices. The splendid watch belonging to the late Earl of Monkhouse, have you not read the newspaper account of it? which the rascal let out of the window by its long chain, and which was not injured, has been shown as the proof of what I intended to do, had I not dropped it, they pretend, in my hasty descent. I should be but a damaging witness to you just now."

"But is that dead to go unpunished then?" asked Hammond, sitting up, and glaring upon Philip with eyes of fire. "Will my word go for nothing? see, I have the marks of the cruel cords yet on my wrists and ankles."

"Did not the guards, or stokers of any of the trains which passed, perceive you?" asked Philip Ruthven, thoughtfully.

"The night was dark as a wolf's mouth," replied Hammond bitterly. "I am afraid not."

"But you must advertise, and mention the line, the place, the trains which passed, said Philip; then you have the evidence of the landlords of the two inns, the one can testify to the manner in which you were inveigled away, the other at the sign of the 'Robin Redbreast,' can bear you out in your assertion that you were brought to the inn bound and gagged, that the lady who ruled the proceedings stated that you were a madman, that you were taken off bound like a maniac of the most dangerous kind. Without me, or my assistance. I should say you have excellent grounds for an action against the Countess of Monkhouse—damages, twenty-five thousand pounds."

"I don't want her money," said Hammond. "I want to humiliate her, imprison her."

Ruthven laughed. "Don't be too savage, remember it is 'all for love' after all. You and I must up and dress, and go to Norah," said Hammond.

Ruthven warned him back. "My dear Hammond, it is impossible. We are some miles from any inn where we can hire a conveyance, the night has come on, and the rain is pouring down like a deluge. You must wait till the morning, then William Jones will lend us his trap, and his high-stepping mare. It is several miles to Yauworth, across the worst of roads, the mare is high-spirited, and easily takes fright, there will be flashes of lightning all night long, and she would infallibly pitch us both over the precipice; besides, you are not well enough yet. We must steam the cold and damp out of you more completely, or else we shall have you suffering with rheumatic fever."

"Ruthven, you never loved, or you would not talk to me of high-spirited mares, or lightning, or rheumatic fever weighing against such a being as my Norah. I have been mad to wait so long; give me my clothes," he continued, passionately. "I will walk over the hills to the 'Crown Inn.'"

"Make your mind easy, your bride knows all about you by this time, at least as much as I thought fit to let her know. I have been hiding now in these mountain villages so long that I know all their ways, and there is a post which goes out from Sternfell at

four in the afternoon, and leaves letters at Yauworth, and other villages. I wrote to Lady Norah Danvers while you were tossing in your sleep, and told her simply that you had lost your way, and been exposed to wet a whole night, that you were under the care of good friends, and sent your adoring love; which of course you would have done, only you were asleep, and I told her not to expect you until to-morrow afternoon, since I was doctoring you, to prevent illness from the wetting. I signed myself P. R.; she will wonder how we met, and be anxious for my safety, sweet soul—but I wrote to her most cheerfully, and she has it by now I should think."

Thus reassured, Hammond consented to lie down again, and submitted to be nursed and tended.

Philip smoked during the night, sitting with his feet on the fender, and the two young men laid their plans, and made their confidences. Ruthven told Hammond under the pledge of profound secrecy of the mystery which associated him with the great Duke of Renfrew. "I was on my way to search for the papers, the certificates of the duke's marriage with my mother, and of my birth. I was told where they were hidden, but this hiding and disgrace, has stopped me midway. How can I gain admittance into the house? I have indeed found out that it is in the occupation of a baronet, who is now living there, but he leaves for the Continent after Christmas. Then I mean to get in and search for the blue-room, and the peculiar hearthstone. Ah! if I could find the golden dream true Hammond. If I might raise my eyes to sweet Viola Beaumont, knowing that my wealth was greater than hers, my blood as noble, but it seems a dream, too bright to be realised."

Hammond's kind heart throbbed with sympathy for his friend, watching his fine face glowing in the lurid light of the ruddy fire, seeing the hope which burnt in the large thoughtful eyes, spite of the care which contracted the corners of the month. Hammond hardly dared to tell him that Viola lay dying in her foreign school, and yet was it not best to break the awful news gently, lest it should stun and overwhelm him utterly when he learned the worst. "Philip," he said, "is your love for Viola Beaumont, a young man's dream of beauty, and ideal bliss? Is she a being whom you have clothed in the lines of your poetic fancy? and will you remember her all your days as a vision, which flitted across your path, bringing airs from Paradise?"

Ruthven turned round suddenly, and hotly; his eyes flashed.

"Then you deem me presumptuous to anticipate, that she will even be to me more than a dream, a—a memory. You Hammond Danvers are the son of a baronet, a university man, a gentleman scholar. You might go to Court if it pleased you. I see all you would imply," he added, dropping his voice, and speaking more gently, "and I have no right to feel angry, or to doubt that you speak in the warm sincerity of a noble friendship—perhaps, you are right Hammond," continued the young man, passing his hand over his brow, and gazing thoughtfully into the fire. "If that hospital nurse deceived me—if she was herself deceived. If I must remain Ruthven, the disgraced student of medicine, about whom there hangs the evil remembrance of an imputed crime. I have no right to raise my eyes to Viola Beaumont and yet yet, she has pledged me her sweet love—aye, pledged it with all the frank earnestness of her young heart. She loves me Hammond Danvers. But if I cannot find the key of gold which opens all doors, why, I shall discover I suppose that she is shut away for ever from me. Well, this life is not to last for ever, is it?"

He caught up the poker as he spoke, and bravely tried to smile while he thrust it vigorously into the fire.

"I must find my solace in work, as Carlyle tells us. My life shall not be a useless or a vicious one, and there is a better one afterwards. You believe that, don't you, Hammond?"

"Yes, Philip, yes," Hammond paused. "A better life where we may rejoice those who have gone before. It has always seemed to me less painful to know that a beloved one was safe in the kingdom of heaven than to find that loved one false, or changed, or married to another!"

"What has that to do with me, or with Viola?" asked Ruthven, in a loud, excited tone.

"Viola is ill," said Hammond, "very, very ill!" Every trace of colour faded out of the face of Ruthven. He got up, and came to the side of his friend.

"Is she dead?" he asked in a hoarse whisper.

"Not when we last heard. Norah and I would have been with her by this time at her school had it not been for that diabolical woman Lady Monkhouse."

"I must go to her at all risks," said Philip, still in that unnatural whisper. "If she is dying I must be with her; if she is dead, I must look upon her in her coffin."

"You had better come with Norah and me?" said Hammond. "You would have more chance of seeing her. Come as my brother—come as anything. We start to-morrow."

"To-morrow early, then, Hammond," said Ruthven. "I can't wait for you and your young wife. There will be such luggage, such packing, such delay!"

"You forget, my boy, that Norah is Viola's twin sister. She has finished her packing; she is in the most desperate haste to see her."

Neither of the friends slept that night. Ruthven paced the chamber from end to end, and Hammond lay watching him. They conversed in whispers, so as not to disturb the kind hosts. Early in the morning a good breakfast was sent into them. Hammond had by this time quite recovered from the effects of exposure. His was a vigorous constitution, and he had youth on his side. His clothes, thoroughly dried and well brushed, his linen washed, aired, and ironed, were brought to him by the amiable hostess, and the farmer lent his trap and mare to convey the young men to the "Crown." He accompanied them, that he might drive back. The morning was dry and windy, cold and bleak. Arrived at the inn, the landlady almost embraced Hammond.

"Oh, sir," she said, "I knew the letter was about you that came for the sweet lady last night. They have carried her off, sir."

"My wife!" roared Hammond, losing patience, and giving way to a burst of honest rage. "I will turn down Glean Flodden, but I will have her!"

"Gently, gently, young man!" said the parson, who had crept unperceived into the bar. "She is a minor. The case will be thrown into Chancery. You stand in peril, trying to marry an heiress who is a minor. The marriage will be set aside, Mr. Rokewood says, and Mr. Rokewood appears an excellent man."

"So much for your penetration, my worthy sir," cried Poor Hammond, bitterly.

"Good-bye—Heaven bless you, Hammond!" said Ruthven, wringing his friend's hand. "I am off to France. I still wear a suit, half-workmanlike, half-tourist fashion. I think nobody will recognise me. I shall get up to London as fast I can."

In his own trouble and wrath Danvers did not forget the necessities of his poorer friend; he went up to his portmanteau, which was in the inn, and forced a ten pound note upon Ruthven's acceptance.

"You can't travel without money," said Hammond. "We part in great grief," continued the young bridegroom, while Ruthven was taking his place in the carriage ordered at the inn; "we may meet in great joy."

As long as they were in sight of each other, the two young men waved their caps in adieux, as affectionate as they were sincere; then a turn in the road shut them out from one another's sight.

CHAPTER XXX.

"Spirit of her, my only love;
Oh now again arise, and let once more
Thine airy accents fall
Soft on my listening ear."

Henry Kirk White.

RUTHVEN'S heart was torn with the most excruciating torture that perhaps can assail suffering humanity; the torture of a dread that merges now towards what seems like the faint of a mocking hope; now towards the blank horror of a measureless despair. Viola recovering—Viola dead! cold, changed, and silent.

"Oh, my love," he whispered to himself, "oh, my love, it was too sweet a vision, too ecstatic a dream, that of one day calling you mine, one day holding you to my heart as my bride, announcing to the world my happiness and triumph. Viola, if you are dead, this wealth, this dukedom may descend to false heirs. I will go abroad and work in the mines, or the gold-fields. I will never open my heart to a single earthly joy, and I will long and look for the day of my death as I have hitherto looked for the day of my wedding."

Ruthven arrived at Peniston in the afternoon, and went by second-class to London in the dusk of the evening. He wore a peculiar blouse and cap, and since none of the railway officials had ever seen him before he escaped detection, or assuredly he would have been seized and imprisoned upon the false charge of Rokewood. He reached London by early morning, went to London Bridge, and took the train for Dover, resolved to pass on by the short sea route to France. The journey was like a confused dream. People and places seemed to pass before him like so many pictures; he was almost in a fever when he reached Paris, at seven in the evening. Fortunately he had a fair knowledge of the language, and was able to ask the way to a cheap, but respectable hotel, near to Notre Dame.

The aspect of the French capital, brilliant with

gas beyond the brilliancy of London as a fine summer day outshines a dull November one, did not strike upon his spirits with the revulsion which he had anticipated. Sights and sounds of gaiety, crowds, music, splendid shops filled with glittering ware, the tone of a foreign tongue in his ears, the restless, swaying populace, the shouts of the carmen, the streets opening one after another like rivers of light—none of these things impressed Ruthven with the disgust which he had imagined he should feel for the gayest city on the face of the earth, while his heart was torn with anguish for his lost love. A convent! Could there be such gloomy institutions as convents, and chill schools with high walls, silence, regimen, and fasting, in that glorious city. He knew not how it was, but so it was that a wild unreasoning hope laid hold of his whole being while the *voiture* was rumbling over the stones of Paris.

He was set down in a street where the white houses, eight-stories high, and wide in proportion, fronted each other, and trees between, though bare now under the wintry sky of December, showed how picturesque was even middle-class Paris, compared to the business streets of our own sterner, more sombre, more earnest looking capital.

Ruthven ascended a long staircase, and knocked at a door, on which was printed—*entresol*—then he rang a bell, and a little smiling dapper gentleman appeared, the master of the hotel. Ruthven asked about prices, and was shown to a small chamber, clean and chilly, near the roof. It was scantily furnished, but suited with the character he assumed of a poor artist come to enter the lists with the copyists at the Louvre. Having deposited his slight baggage in his chamber, he descended to the *entresol*, and the host, with all the politeness of a Frenchman, invited him to enter his own *salon*, or parlour, and warm himself by the fire.

Madame the wife, was knitting near the blaze, a fat, brown old French lady, simply dressed, as is most the fashion of those who work in any way in Paris we have remarked.

It is the elderly ladies of fashion who dress handsomely there—not the landladies of hotels.

Ruthven asked for chocolate and an omelet, and while this was being prepared he inquired of the landlord the address of the *Demoiselles de la Harpe* Champs Elysees, and also respecting the character of their school.

"Good sort of people" cried Madame Vernon, "I had a great niece at their school; their terms are high and exclusive, but I come of a good family myself in Provence, and some of my relations are enormously rich wine growers."

Ruthven cared nothing, it is needless to say, for Madame Vernon's wine growing relations, all he wished to know was the character of the schoolmistresses who had the care of Viola, and who had reported so sad an account of her since she had been under their care.

"The school is attached to a convent, is it not madame?" asked Ruthven.

"Yes, the great Convent of the Sacred Heart; the ladies de la Harpe are devout catholics but not nuns, they act however wholly under the auspices; and the orders of the mother superior of the convent."

"Have they the reputation of attending carefully to the health of their pupils?" asked Philip eagerly; "since they are attached to the convent, perhaps, they impose fasts and penances. I have a dear friend there." The young man paused in strong excitement.

"A sister monsieur?" asked the hostess, with the punctilious propriety of a Frenchwoman, for in France, as perhaps, the reader knows, young girls are so shut away from young men to the day of the wedding that it is never supposed a young gentleman, not related to them, could take an interest in them.

"She is not my sister" said Philip.

Madame Vernon opened her large brown eyes in mild astonishment, partly pretence Ruthven fancied.

"Your cousin?" persisted Madame Vernon, still looking up with those mild brown eyes filled with astonishment, from her knitting, for the Hotel Vernon was a quiet old fashioned hotel, such as suited the slender means of Ruthven, and Madame Vernon was an industrious woman of German descent, who seldom had her knitting out of her hand.

"No relation to me at all madame" cried Ruthven, his old impetuosity sweeping over him like a flood, and breaking down the barriers of reserve which he had imposed on himself. "I love her passionately."

"Ah! a romance," said madame, laying down her knitting on the table, and looking at Ruthven out of the calm eyes which had opened upon this busy world some fifty-five years previously, eyes which had expended their youthful fire, and shed their bitterest tears thirty-years before this wintry night on which they first beheld the impassioned Ruthven—his young heart beating, his young blood boiling, alj

the tortures of love, all the fears of death, all the unutterable pathos of an anguished soul looking out of his dilating grey eyes.

The quiet elderly woman regarded the sufferings of Ruthven with the pity, half-smiling, half kind, which grown-up people award to the transports, the loud cries, the peevish despair of a little child who has lost a toy or who is forbidden some unwholesome fruit.

It is strange how completely some aged folks forget and ignore the storms and the sufferings of their early manhood and womanhood. There is something pitiless in the cold indifference with which they contemplate the general anxieties, the headlong rage, the wild hopes, the ecstatic bliss of those who are passing through that burning phase of human existence.

"Ah, a romance, monsieur," said Madame Vernon—and now she took up her knitting again. "Here is your chocolate—come, and your omelet, and I hope that you will like our nice little cakes, there is butter in them."

The *bonne* or maid-servant, wearing a thick white frilled cap, entered with the tray, and Ruthven, drawing his chair up to the table, began to break the fine French bread, and he cut his omelet and stirred the chocolate, but he ate nothing.

"You do not eat, monsieur," said Madame Vernon.

"No, madame, because I am too much agitated; the young lady whom I love is said to be dying in the School of the *Demoiselles de la Harpe*, and I have come over to Paris, resolved most fully upon gaining an entrance to their house and seeking Viola."

"Madness, my dear monsieur," said the elderly lady, quietly. "I am sorry to dishearten you, but to effect an entrance into a ladies' school is next to impossible here on the Continent, even if you are related to one of the pupils; but when you are no relative, when you are a lover! My dear young gentleman it would be far easier to gain admittance to the private apartments of the empress herself."

"Ah, madame," said Ruthven; "difficulty shall not daunt me; I must see Viola, if she is ill. If she is well, I must see her to satisfy myself on that point."

"I do not see at all how you are to manage it, monsieur," said Madame Vernon, with her quiet smile. "You have come here to paint pictures in the Louvre. Take my advice; go on with your work, go and see the sights of Paris, endeavour to form acquaintances among the people, perfect yourself in the language more completely, and forget this romance of the affections. I assure you all these things pass by like the wind. When you are my age you will laugh at the folly of to-night; enter into a ladies' school to see a young girl who is said to be ill and dying. My dear monsieur, the idea won't admit of a second moment's consideration. Why the police would have you in prison if they found you so much as trespassing in the garden."

"Nevertheless, madame, I am resolved to effect my purpose," said Philip. "Not all the nuns, all the schoolmistresses, all the police in your splendid city shall prevent me, if I die in the attempt. I care nothing; I will see Viola."

"This is but the mad folly of youth," said Madame, fastening off a thread in her knitting.

"It is the firm resolve of a man," retorted Ruthven, with a blazing light in his eyes. "Ah, madame; if you would help me, if I dared tell you what wicked persecutors are the guardians of this beautiful girl."

He paused a moment. There was something very kind, though very calm and quiet in the brown eyes of madame. Ruthven had sufficient penetration to discover that fact, and although the stoicism of the elderly dame irritated him to madness, he felt quite convinced that she was incapable of cruelty, meanness, or falsehood.

"I should be most happy to help you if it were possible," said madame, drily, commencing another row of knitting.

"Let me, at least, tell you the history of this beautiful girl," said impetuous Ruthven. "She is an earl's daughter, madame, and her vile guardian desires her death that he may seize upon her fortune of fifty thousand pounds."

Madame's brown eyes grew larger and larger, while Ruthven recounted, in such French as he was master of, the history of the earl's murder, the cruel stepmother, the infamous guardian, the imprisonment and sufferings of the twins.

"And that is why, madame, I have been so anxious in inquiring the characters of these Ladies de la Harpe. Lady Viola was well when she left Grand Court in the autumn; how is it, then, that she arrives at the school in a dying state, as the *Messes de la Harpe* state in letters to England? Lady Viola has not once written, it seems, even to her twin sister. All this looks very strange and very ill."

By this time Madame Vernon was thoroughly interested in the history of the twins. Ruthven might

have raved on of his love and of his sufferings for ever without moving the practical French woman to other than the pity, half-contemptuous, half-kind, which one feels for the imaginary and short-lived riors of a passionate infant; but the rank, splendour, and the beauty of the twins, their orphan condition, the great fortunes at stake, the danger which seemed to threaten their lives, all these facts appealed to what remains of romantic feeling yet lingered in the ample breast of Madame Vernon.

"The Ladies de la Harpe, my dear young man," she said to Ruthven, "are excellent women. I have always believed devout Catholics and most rigid in propriety, and I do not think they would lend themselves to any evil practices for the whole world. Still, the Lady Viola may have been subjected to cruel treatment on the journey. I would advise you to be careful."

Madame paused, and Ruthven's heart beat to suffocation.

"Madame," he said, "these women are acquaintances of yours. Will you not introduce me under some pretence?"

"Impossible," she said. "At least there is one way, but it is a way from which I shrink, it is an action for which the Church might excommunicate me; the only question is this, if you can see this young girl and discover from her own lips how ill she has been used, you may interest the very Government here on her behalf. You say that in England there appears to be no redress, since the law gives up minors wholly to the charge of their guardians, unless a special action be entered upon against those guardians, and it seems most unhappily that there are only a couple of young gentlemen, yourself and another, willing to enter upon that action. The friends and connections of the girls have abandoned them. But if the French Government took up the cause, why the very English Government might prosecute this Rokewood. Yes, yes, I will risk it," continued Madame, after a pause. "You shall see Lady Viola, but remember, no love-making. You are, really, both too young to know your own minds, and I quite think a wife so much above you in rank would not conduce to your happiness, but you must go disguised."

"As what?" asked Ruthven.

"As a priest," said Madame. "Can you not come as an English priest? Your accent in speaking French would betray that you were English. An English priest come to offer the consolations of religion to Lady Viola, of whose illness you have heard through her guardian. It is true that the ladies know that your Viola is Protestant, but they are such staunch Catholics, that they will be delighted to admit a priest of their own faith to a dying patient. You must shave off that splendid moustache, young sir, and to-morrow I will accompany you to the school; but remember, you will not be one instant away from my sight. No love making, young gentleman."

Ruthven did not reply. His heart was too full for utterance. He was about to see Viola; would he see her dying—dead—living? Was he too late, perhaps, after all, for any of these conditions? Was Viola lying cold, silent under the stones in the convent chapel? Heaven in its mercy forbid!

"Now take your chocolate," said Madame; "it is cold, I fear, and your ouellet is good for nothing. To-morrow we will go together to this Pension des Demoiselles."

Ruthven was far too much excited either to eat or to sleep. He was shown to his chamber, and casting himself dressed upon the bed he passed the night in eager thinking, planning, scheming. If Viola should recover she ought not to remain in the foreign school, which had agreed so ill with her health, argued the anxious lover, and then came thoughts of her escape, her speedy marriage with himself. Alas, and alas! poor Philip; was it not far more likely that Viola, sweet, loving Viola, would become the bride of death?

All these thoughts took shape towards morning, and formed themselves into a series of fantastic dreams; from these he was awoke by the clock of Notre Dame sounding the hour of nine. He arose, washed, changed his clothes, and hastily descending the staircase, found his way to the *entresol* and *salon*. Madame Vernon was presiding at the breakfast-table. Several gentlemen of various nations were present—quite a babel of tongues.

Ruthven was really hungry by this time, and he did not scruple to make a good meal. Afterwards Madame called him aside, and gave him a key, with directions where to find his room.

"You will see the priest's dress there," she said. "A black robe, and a large square hat. It is a grotesque costume. You must shave off your moustache, monsieur. Vernon has left his razors for your use. He is in the secret, and anxious to rescue this daughter of an English noble."

It would have been difficult to have discovered Philip was a medical student, and no priest, when about an hour from that time he departed in a *voiture* with Madame Vernon for the Pension of the Demoiselles de la Harpe.

Ruthven was pale as death. His shaven lip imparted an air of still greater youthfulness to his appearance; his strange hat and long black robe, and the large book of the mass which he carried, might have deceived sharper eyes than those of the good Demoiselles de la Harpe.

The school stood behind high walls, in a thickly-planted avenue in the Champs Elysées; the convent again stood behind still higher walls. The general entrance to both was through high gates of iron. All the trees were bare on that cold December morning, the sky was overcast, the wind was shrill; there was a sprinkling of snow upon the hardened earth.

The heart of Ruthven sank like lead when the *voiture* entered the grim gates. He felt, as did the clever old Frenchwoman who accompanied him, that he was practising a deception which nothing but the urgency of the case excused.

The visitors were shown into a small parlour very plainly furnished; there was however a bright fire in the room. After a space entered the eldest Mademoiselle de la Harpe a little shrivelled French lady, of fifty-five, dressed in brown silk; her black hair streaked with white was fashionably arranged, she wore a white ruffe, and a large gold brooch and chain. She bent actually with humility before the false young priest, who returned the obeisance profoundly.

Ruthven cast his eyes on the carpet, and listened while Madame Vernon spoke.

"I am Madame Vernon, mademoiselle; my husband is only an hotel-keeper, but I am not unknown to you, since my great niece was with you two years." Little Fantine Delarue?

"Truly, Madame," said the schoolmistress, smiling, and offering a chair.

"And this young priest, Monsieur Harding, comes from England; he is a friend of the guardian of Lady Viola Beaumont, now under your care; this young enthusiast is anxious to see the patient—having hopes of effecting her conversion to Catholicism. I cannot say why, but he has felt it to be his mission. Can he see her?"

Philip's heart sank lower and lower. It was terrible to be driven to this ruse, it was terrible to feign an interest in a human soul spiritually, while his whole nature glowed and shivered alternately with the fluctuations of an earthly passion: how hope made glad music in his heart, how fear drove him pale and gasping to the black confines of despair.

"Lady Viola can hardly survive the night," said mademoiselle, in a tone of sorrow. "Poor young girl, I do not think the thoughts of another world are sufficiently rife with her, she talks of her father in a strange way. But our good young Father—"

And the French lady paused for the name.

"Father Henri," said Madame, promptly.

"Father Henri thinks he can awaken her, how glad should I be? Come, then, monsieur."

Solemnly the little conclave passed through uncarpeted passages by a chapel where the pealing notes of the organ filled the whole house, then by a class-room where the murmuring voices of some sixty pupils attested to the instruction that was going on within.

The false young priest almost fainted when mademoiselle, pausing before a door on the second floor, and turning the handle, said:

"Lady Viola, my dear, here is a good, young priest come from England to see you."

A faint moan of pain was the only reply, and then the painful, laboured breathing, which tells of the approach of death.

There was a curtain over the bed raised through a ring, and Philip could not summon courage to pass from the foot of the bed and look upon the beloved face that was about to pass away for ever. He paused, and a great sob convulsed his chest.

"Feeling and pious young priest," cried mademoiselle, enthusiastically.

But poor Madame Vernon felt as guilty as she was sorrowful. She remained silent.

(To be continued.)

LOCAL TAXATION.—The Blue-book issued a few weeks ago, showing the amount of local taxation levied in the several parishes of England and Wales in the year ending at Lady-day, 1868, has been followed by a supplement of 291 pages, stating the rate in the pound of the aggregate of all local rates in each parish on the rateable value. The rates vary greatly in different places. They are below 1s. in several parishes, as low as 6d. in two thinly-populated

parishes in Lincolnshire and the West Riding, and 5d. in the parish of Hardwick, Suffolk, with its twenty-five inhabitants and rateable value of 343l. On the other hand, the rates exceed 5s. in the pound in many parishes, exceed 6s. in several, exceed 7s. in some, and are stated at 8s. in the pound in the parish of St. Margaret's, King's Lynn. The present volume makes some corrections in the summary of the year's local taxation in England and Wales, and gives the following amended summary:—Amount levied for poor relief, 7,834,870l. including 336,811l. for vaccination and registration fees, payments under the Parochial Assessment and Union Assessment Committee Acts, salaries of collectors, &c.; county, hundred, borough and police rate, 2,760,352l.; highway rate, 1,538,215l.; church-rates, 217,083l.; lighting and watching rate, 76,978l.; Improvement Commissioners, 455,431l.; general district rates, 1,795,690l.; rates under Courts of Commissioners of Sewers, including drainage and embankment rates, 709,071l.; rates of other kinds, 1,855,473l. including 981,140l. for general and lighting rates levied by vestries and roads under the Metropolis Local Management Acts; making a total of 16,734,163l. local taxation of England and Wales in the year ending at Lady-day, 1868. The return has been prepared by the Poor Law Board, and appears to have been compiled with care and pains.

ECONOMY ON PAPER.—The War Office has decided upon reducing the amount of stationery now issued at the public expense to staff and department offices. Each clerk is to be supplied with four dozen pens a year and four lead pencils, but no more, and the issue of needles, pins, knives, scissors, rulers, and "Imperial Calendars" is to be entirely discontinued. It is further enjoined that the strictest economy should be exercised with regard to writing paper, and letters on the public service are to be written on half-sheets.

SARDINES.—Of these appetising little fish there were caught during the month of July last on the coast of France: At the Sables d'Olonne, 30,000,000; St. Gilles-sur-Vie, 15,000,000; Arachen, 6,500,000; Etel, 19,000,000; Belle Isle, 13,000,000; Croisic, 16,000,000; L'île d'Yeu, 1,580,000; La Rochelle, Rochefort, Oléron, and L'île de Ré, 3,000,000. Total, 104,080,000. The *Moniteur de la Flotte*, which gives the above figures, says, that although the number caught for last month is not yet known, it quite equals that given above, the total for the two months being probably about 228,000,000, from which it would appear that the number caught at Rochelle, &c., should have been shown as thirteen instead of three millions.

DOES BRAIN WORK SHORTEN LIFE?—In a report for 1867, it is stated that in twenty-five years nearly, the deaths of 3,565 professional men had been reported, with an average of 50.5 years, and 9,856 merchants, financiers, agents, &c., with an average age of 48.4 years. The averages of those who died in some of the most important professions and occupations were as follows:—bankers, 54.7 years; bank officers, 54.8 years; merchants, 53.0 years; booksellers, 50.5 years; clergymen, 57.8 years; judges and justices, 66.4 years; lawyers, 56.1 years; physicians, 56.0 years; professors, 56.0 years; public officers, 64.5 years. Many more are injured by excessive indulgences of the bodily passions and appetites than by excessive indulgence in literary labour. Tobacco and alcohol produce far more softening of the brain and disease of the heart among students in this country than close application to their studies. The leading public men of all countries, notwithstanding their severe mental labour and the excitement of their anxious life, reach old age. In fact, the brain men, independent of dissipation, seem to outlast ordinary men.

A NEW ANÆSTHETIC.—A new anæsthetic has been lately discovered by Dr. Liebrich, to which he has given the name of chloralhydrat. It is highly spoken of by the faculty, and is said to be superior to chloroform, producing a more complete state of unconsciousness, while it neither induces feebleness nor leaves any bad effects behind. A medical gentleman has informed us that he has held rabbits from 12 to 14 hours under the influence of chloralhydrat, during a part of which time he kept them suspended over the back of a chair, and as soon as they had wakened up they displayed their usual activity, and fed with unimpaired appetite. We have also learned that the newly discovered body has been most successfully applied as a sedative in the treatment of the insane. Chloralhydrat resembles chloroform in appearance, but it is not so heavy, and being much less volatile than that body, it has of course a feebler smell. On the tongue it has a sharp, but not an acid taste, and though it reminds one of chloroform, it gives the sensation neither of the warmth nor sweetness of the latter substance. Chloralhydrat is absorbed and not inspired, and in this respect it differs from all other anæsthetics. When liquid ammonia is added to a solution of this body, chloroform is precipitated.



[THE FACE OF THE SIBYL.]

THE DOWAGER'S SECRET.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE first grey sunbeams stealing through the gloom of a clouded sky, saw a tall, thin figure with a violin under its arm, standing in the Haupt platz, a central square of the old town of Munich, from which the other streets all diverge, running towards the walls in a sort of irregular circle. The countrymen with their produce, and the artisans and those tradesmen requiring to be early at their work, all glanced at him carelessly; but something in the pale, haggard face, with its look of suppressed suspense and anguish, roused the sympathy and curiosity of the most indifferent.

"I can't stop to hear you play, good man, but there's a florin for you," said one generous-hearted farmer, hurrying on with his marketing after he dropped the coin at the man's feet.

Upon which half a dozen others stepped forward and flung down their contribution to the pile.

Herr Wohler's pale face flushed with wounded pride, but he said gently:

"Nay, good friends, you mistake. I do not seek for money. Give your charity to the poor who is more needy than I; see the cripple yonder."

And taking the money in his hand he crossed over to the base of a bronze statue, where a miserable looking old man leaned on his crutch, with bleary eyes only half open, as if he had spent the night there, and was scarcely yet awake.

"Take it, my unfortunate brother," said Herr Wohler in that voice of gentle dignity; "may you find it of much service, and in return give me Godspeed upon my errand this day."

The old man mumbled over his thanks, scrambled up the money with his soiled claw-like fingers, and turned as fast as his misfortune would allow toward the nearest *caff*.

"And meanwhile these benevolent men wait. I will pay them to the best of my ability," murmured Herr Wohler.

And he lifted the fine old instrument, and drew the bow, and played for them such a strain as those uncultivated men around him could scarcely appreciate, although their ears were thrilled with the subtle melancholy of the witching air.

"Bravo! bravo! Are you going all around the town? You will win many florins; but do not give them all away?" said one man lightly.

Herr Wohler flung out the hand, so dexterous and

skillful to wake these noblest strains, in a dignified gesture of adieu, and walked slowly down one of the streets, looking wistfully up to the quaint windows of the ancient houses, as he passed. Did any of those dingy old walls cage his singing-bird? Oh, how his yearning heart longed for the magic clue to show him whither she had vanished. But it was in his violin. Blessed violin! He clasped it with a fond, caressing pressure, fixed himself against a supporting wall, and, drawing the bow, startled the wakening members of many a worthy family by a clear, vibrating strain of harmonious melody. Ears that had been wont to listen entranced to the noblest music turned to catch this new air eagerly.

"What is it? whose is it? It is heavenly in its sweetness, but full of earthly pathos and grief, and a master-hand draws the bow!" cried the amateur of the neighbourhood. And his opinion being speedily circulated, windows were opened, and people strolled out to listen, and to look curiously at the pale-faced, patient-eyed old man.

But he finished his air, folded his arms, and with his head dropping low on his breast. How should they know that their idle questions fell meaningless on an ear strained to catch the slightest hint of a muffled response?

When he had waited long enough to be satisfied, he moved on slowly, and just far enough to obtain a new circle for audience, when the magic bow awoke again, the same sweet, unknown melody.

As the morning waned and people were more astir he attracted more notice, and the children began to gather around in little awed groups. Only one mischievous urchin had ventured to be rude, and he had retreated, shame-crimsoned to the very roots of his tangled curls, when the melancholy eyes turned upon him, and the voice said:

"Did you know I have lost my little girl, and I am trying to find her with my violin?"

It was slow work—disheartening and sickening also, when street after street was threaded and gave forth no other response than the cold or curious gaze of strangers. But Herr Wohler persisted, and gave himself less and less rest between his music.

"There are but one or two streets tried," he murmured with nervous impatience; "and there is all Munich—the old town and the new—to be hunted over yet."

The rumour of his eccentric movement went before him, and though he refrained from confiding to any one else the object of his pursuit, the crowd thickened upon his appearance and it was sometimes

annoying, and exceedingly trying to his sensitive pride, to continue his playing while he was the target of so many watchful eyes. But presently he was more able to isolate his thoughts, to forget that a single soul was near, and to merge all emotion in the one idea of playing to Tessa—to poor somewhere imprisoned and sorely wronged Tessa, whose strained ear would fill with joy at the first recognition of Father Franz's approach. He took the streets in their consecutive order, and never played but once, any other air than that which he had improvised for his darling. That exception was when a pale, sickly girl looked out of a window, with wide hungry eyes, and wished she could hear her childhood's hymn from such a player.

Herr Wohler lifted his abstracted eyes, bowed gravely, and asked the name of the hymn, and when she gave it he played it through, for all it added to the fatigue of the tired arm and lost a few moments more of the precious time.

She thanked him through her tears, and he answered in as grateful a voice:

"Wish me Godspeed upon my errand."

Another time a hand was laid lightly upon his arm, and turning he confronted a tall woman dressed in black, with a thick, black veil over her face. Something in the upright figure, in the haughty poise of the head struck him as familiar.

"Herr Wohler," said the unknown, gently; "what strange freak is this? Why in one of Bach's famous *maestros* wandering around our streets like a common minstrel?"

"Have not the common people, whose burdens press heavily, a right to hear good music also?" replied he.

"And yet it is flinging pearls before swine," with a bitter intonation of voice.

"Nay," returned Herr Wohler, reproachfully, "a little back I left a poor sufferer melted in tears of sacred joy. That alone were quite enough to repay me for this day's fatigue."

"You are a good man—one of heaven's noblemen," cried the woman; "and yet how unjust is fate! Your eye is dim and your heart wrung with anguish."

"Heaven can see and hear," responded Herr Wohler, with a little sob braving the forced composure of his voice. "Who knows but the blessings of these poor souls who are touched by my music to-day will bring about my own restoration to happiness?"

"Then you own that I have told you true? I am reported to have the gift of prophecy, to solve dark mysteries, to answer perplexing questions. Do you care to consult my skill?"

"I should have no faith in a hidden oracle. I should never worship at a veiled altar," answered Herr Wohler. "You know my name, and it seems to me there is something familiar in your carriage; but until I see your face I give little credence to your words."

"It will help you nothing to look upon a time-worn mask, which has petrified at last, so that the fretting passions beneath leave no imprint."

"Ah," said Herr Wohler, "now I recognise her ladyship the Dowager Baroness of Grafenstein."

The woman lifted an imperious hand and flung back the heavy folds of sable crape, and showed to his surprised vision a singular countenance. The features, still showing traces of statuesque beauty, of a peculiar yellowish waxy tinge, the eyes brilliant jet black, the thin lips curled with a slightly satirical smile, and a high, massive forehead, shaded by smooth bands of silver-white hair. It was a face never to be forgotten, but it was not that of the Dowager Baroness of Grafenstein.

"Well," said she, evidently enjoying his surprise, "you see that it is not her ladyship, and have looked upon the face of the sybil. If you have any questions to ask, let them be spoken quickly, for it is hardly the place here in this public street for a prolonged interview."

"It is absurd and childish," muttered Herr Wohler, "but, but—"

And he handled his violin with tremulous fingers, and glanced again uneasily at that singular face.

"But still you would like to ask me a single question," said she, with a careless laugh. "Herr Wohler, because I know you are like a child in your purity and simplicity of heart, like a true man in your chivalrous generosity and bravery, like a demigod in genius and magnanimity, and like a woman in your sweetness and delicacy of heart, I shall answer for you that question which alone stirs all your thoughts. You will find her at last, safe and happy. Heed my words, trust to them though they seem to brave fate and beard truth itself."

She dropped the veil, turned herself about, and glided swiftly away.

"Who is this woman?" muttered Herr Wohler, staring after her bewilderedly, and then the next moment he started forward with a little cry, and began to follow her.

"Dolt, idiot that I am. The woman who looked so much like the Dowager Baroness Grafenstein, and yet was not she, the woman in black, veiled with the peculiar voice which Frau Helver would know anywhere. Is not this she? And she tells me I shall find Tessa. Woman, woman, come back and tell me what you mean!"

But while he was stumbling forward, his eyes all mist, his knees trembling, his heart beating unevenly, the woman disappeared, where, how, he had not the slightest clue.

And just then a horseman came cantering down the street, looking on either side, and when he spied that forlorn figure with the violin thrust under one arm and the other stretched out towards vacancy, he leaped off, and came hurrying towards him.

"Herr Wohler, Herr Wohler, I am looking everywhere for you. They want you promptly, up, up, at the dead house, sir."

Herr Rosenberg's pitying glance said more than his words.

The old *maestro's* hand dropped down limp and nerveless. He started at the speaker blankly, and repeated in a feeble, querulous voice that was not at all like his:

"I don't know what you can want of me there. I have my own business to attend to. Get some one else."

"But, sir, it is to identify the lady. We have found in the river a young woman with long brown curls, and the dress is a light muslin over a white, silk skirt, and there is a red, withered rose pinned at the breast," replied the detective, breaking his news with more abruptness than his kind heart dictated, because of the apathetic expression of the old man's face. "I want you to come and make sure of its identification."

"The identification of what?" demanded Herr Wohler, putting one hand to his forehead.

"Of this poor child, sir, for there does not seem a reasonable doubt but it is the body of Theresa Schuyler."

"Dead, Tessa dead!" ejaculated the poor old *maestro* in a hollow voice; "is it so I am to find her? No, no. Heaven is more merciful than that. Oh, my violin! do you think her ears are so dull she will not hear the familiar strains? That glorious voice so hushed that it shall never resound in its silver clearness? No, no, no! I will not believe it! Where is the false sybil? I should find her, find her safe and happy. Did she mean by that safe up in the shining heavens? Where is Konrad, what will the poor lad say?"

"Konrad is there, waiting for you. My dear sir, you have the deepest sympathy of everyone who knows of this sad case. Be assured, if there has been foul play, we will spare no pains to ferret out the murderer."

"The murderer! Tessa's murderer!" repeated Herr Wohler, in feeble, faltering accents. "It cannot be! it is too terrible!"

The violin slipped out from under his trembling arm and crashed down upon the pavement. He dropped the bow upon it.

"Let it lie," said Herr Wohler, "I need it no more."

CHAPTER XIV.

A GROUP of grave, awed faces gave way, as Herr Rosenberg came through the low doorway, supporting the wavering figure of the old *maestro*, and then the latter's shuddering glance caught the view of the slight length lying on the roughly improvised bier. But though he shuddered, his eye was fascinated by the horrible sight, and took in each pitiful detail greedily. Pitiful, pitiful indeed! There were the small, slender feet, still encased in the tiny kid slippers, the white stockings changed, by the action of wind, water, and green river slime, to a forlorn, dingy hue. The silken skirt and the light muslin overdress shared the same fate and gave no hint of their original whiteness; but one of the assistants had snipped out a fragment from each, and tosted by water and soap their former purity. The arms were swollen and discoloured, but the hand retained its delicacy of form and exquisite symmetry. Over the face a white linen cloth was laid, and Herr Wohler understood that it was mercifully done to hide the hideous work of the soaking water. But the long, soft hair of gold-touched brown had defied a destroying hand upon its silken beauty. It rippled down around the slender shoulders with a shimmering flow that had a mockery of life. When he saw that hair, Herr Wohler gave a piteous cry.

"Tessa, little Tessa. Oh, I did not believe it before," wailed he.

"Father Franz! Oh, Father Franz," ejaculated Konrad, rushing out from behind Count Scheffer and seizing upon the old *maestro's* hand; "can we believe this? Can we trust this horrible, hideous witness?"

"Have you looked at the face?" asked Father Franz, in a weak, wavering voice.

Konrad shuddered.

"I have, but I beg of you to refrain. There is nothing there to bear likeness to a human countenance, much less to her beautiful, young face. Oh, why does my heart cry out so fiercely, refusing to accept this horrible, horrible reality?"

"We have sent for the little dressmaker to make assurance doubly sure," observed one of the detectives, "and the carriage that is now stopping, must have brought her."

He went out as he spoke and returned a moment after, with the brisk little woman following behind him, uttering little ejaculations of horror and flinging out her hands in excited gestures.

"Ah, heavens! this is too frightful to believe. That beautiful angel in all her blooming youth! No, no, one can never believe it. It is too frightful!"

Konrad caught his breath sharply and held fast to Herr Wohler's hands, while with one of the detective's aid, the dressmaker went up and examined the robe.

"Alack! that is off my piece of blonde, that edging!" she muttered; "and this is muslin and that is white silk, for certain. Ah, now I remember I took the wrong measure and we pieced the front breadth of the under skirt to make it right."

She lifted the discoloured muslin and examined the under skirt, and then spoke in a low, awed voice.

"Yes, gentlemen, that is the dress I made for the beautiful young lady."

Herr Wohler bowed his trembling arms over Konrad's shoulder.

"O, my lad, my lad, this is bitter hard! My poor back has weathered many gales, but this, I think, will carry me under."

Konrad's face was deadly pale, the drops of cold dew beaded his forehead, but for the dear old man's sake he sought to master his agony of anguish, though he sought in vain to find a comforting word. He could only clasp fondly the poor old trembling hands and nerve his youthful strength to support the wavering frame.

Count Scheffer had stood among the group with a face as pale and full of horror and sorrowful dismay as any of the nearer friends. He came out from the window, suddenly, and said abruptly:

"Some one else has come. There is another carriage drawing up."

"Ah, yes," said Herr Rosenberg, with a look of interest; "Wickart hurried off for some one. I presume it is her ladyship from Grafenstein House."

Count Scheffer's eyes fired with a glare of fierce anger. He returned Meenart's gesture, and retreated again to the window. When they heard the approaching footsteps the group parted, and left a free space, into which with a steady, unfaltering step, walked a tall, erect figure, clothed from head to foot in sable. Herr Wohler gave a fierce ejaculation and strode forward, but fell back again as the lady threw back her veil, and disclosed the grave, calm features of the Dowager Baroness of Grafenstein.

She looked a moment hesitatingly towards the bereaved friends, and then turned to Herr Rosenberg.

"I have come to receive my own confirmation of this sad end to the promising life of the gifted young songstress, who so won upon my daughter-in-law's affections. I wish to know if there can be the faintest shadow of a doubt concerning the identification?"

"We are afraid not, your ladyship. We have just received the dressmaker's assurance that this is the same clothing."

Somewhat to the detective's surprise, her ladyship moved a step nearer the bier. It was a sight from which the most unfeeling woman must shrink, and for a lady of such delicate rearing and high birth a single glance would appear to be too trying. Nevertheless, the dowager moved on slowly, and stood looking down scrutinisingly. She even touched the exquisitely-modelled hand, which looked so much like sculptured marble, and then raised the sleeve, and her sharp eyes, holding a greedy, gloating look, had only they been able to have seen it under the drooping lashes, followed up the arm, which was discoloured and swollen. But at the shoulder it was marble cold and fair again. The dowager's eye flashed out a steady glow of triumph. What she looked for was there, distinct and plain, a tiny red mark veined in the snowy fairness. Count Scheffer had seen it before, and had turned away, sickened with bitter sorrow, and the realisation of its direful connection with his own disappointment and defeat. He was watching that cold, hard face with an eye burning fiercely with anger and resentment.

He stepped out and confronted her with a stern, accusing glance, before she had time to turn away.

For just one moment, that cold, glittering eye of hers seemed to blanch, but then there came a glow over it, the flaming out of the inward triumph and exultation.

"Ah, count, so you also, are here? I suppose there is not a question but this is really the body of that hapless child. It is a very melancholy sight!"

His answer came through grated teeth, his voice was hoarse with rage.

"A hapless child, indeed! Does your ladyship understand that we all realize that this beautiful and gifted innocent was murdered? That we shall hunt down the dastardly hand which sent her to such a doom—hunt it down as mercilessly as it consigned her to that hideous death, whether it be in high places or in low ones?"

She brushed from her long, sable veil a streak of dust which it had swept from the rude bier, while she answered composedly:

"It is a wise movement. No one can be more interested in the unravelling of this singular disappearance than my daughter-in-law or myself."

And turning to Herr Rosenberg she added in her accustomed voice of chilling dignity:

"You will call upon the Baroness Grafenstein, if you need any further funds towards making a strict investigation."

She dropped her veil as she finished, and turned towards Herr Wickart, who respectfully opened the door for her retreat, and escorted her to her carriage.

Count Scheffer bit his lip till the blood came, and stood staring out of the window after her with flaming eyes, which would fain have possessed the lightning's power to have melted down with one fierce flash the mask of ice or iron, which hid from the world the dark secrets of that fierce and haughty heart.

Rosenberg and Meenart were both watching him with the sharp discerning eyes of trained detectives, and he did his best to conquer his agitation.

Approaching Konrad, he said gently:

"I suppose we must be satisfied with the testimony we have received. We must take this poor wreck of so much grace and loveliness to a sunny spot, that at least it may have a pleasant burial-place. Have you any preference?"

The young man sighed heavily, and turned to Herr Wohler, but the poor old *maestro* was like one lost in a dream, and put out his hands helplessly.

"Use your own judgment," said he, drearily. "I think I am losing my mind. I cannot make it seem that she is found. My heart gives no recognition, but still goes wandering, searching over the earth, as if its darling was still watching and crying for me."

Konrad looked at the dull eye and ashy cheek with keen anxiety, and said with tenderest feeling:

"Come, Father Franz, let us go home; this is no place for you."

"Home!" repeated the old *maestro*, "where is it? Tessa is not there, and I left my violin broken in the street."

"But Gotthart, poor Gotthart!" pleaded Konrad, "he is all alone there, filled no doubt with wild suspense, as well as bitter anguish. Think how long we have left him to bear it alone. Let us go and mingle our tears with his!"

"Dear Gotthart," murmured Father Franz, "he and Tessa were closer companions than either of us. I wish we could bring Gotthart here, to see if that subtle, sensitive spirit of his would be as dull and obdurate as mine; would refuse to thrill beneath the spiritual presence of the dear one, and still turn, longing and aching, towards some vague, unknown spot."

"We must have rest and sleep somehow," whispered the count, pityingly, with a meaning gesture towards the forehead.

"Woe is me! This is indeed a pitiless storm," sighed poor Konrad, as he went out to speak for the carriage to take the old man home.

"My dear kinsman," returned the count, earnestly; "do you not know that my hopes go down with yours? Keep up bravely I beseech you. I shall send a hurried despatch to General Halberg as soon as I get home, then I shall come again to your rooms. I should insist upon taking you away, but I can understand that, in his present state, it would be the breaking up of that noble old mind of Herr Wohler's. And, moreover, I am aware that another has the better right. I only want him to be in a gentle humour when I show to General Halberg that face of your Gotthart's. Then I will risk my whole fortune, but he will do you better justice."

"Alack! I have no heart to think of these hopes now. I can only feel the anguish of this blow," replied Konrad sadly.

The count assisted him to put in the helpless old *maestro*, and watched him bending down from the opposite seat with eyes of earnest, pitiful affection, and as the carriage rolled away, he looked after it, and muttered scornfully.

"Noble birth—gentle blood. How I hate the words! How will that brave, honest heart be one iota nobler when my uncle leads him proudly before the world as his acknowledged heir? And yet only thus will the blind, dull eye of society discover his inherent nobility of nature. The old man is a prince in genius, and gentleness of heart, and this baroness dowager—oh, what a she-wolf, what a vile, low, cruel nature! Yet people will talk of her gentle blood! Bah! the world disgusts me!"

Two hours afterwards, Count Scheffer opened the door of the little sitting-room in the shadow of the Cathedral's twin towers, and saw an eager, excited group with hands close clasped, and cheeks no longer pale but flushed hotly, and eyes burning bright with renewed hope.

"What is it, Konrad?" demanded he.

The young man rose, and seized his hand.

"Count Scheffer, we have talked it all over, and all three of us refuse to credit her death."

"But it is proved beyond a question. It is sheer desperation to deny it," exclaimed he, in great astonishment.

"Not quite, sir; listen a moment and hear our reasons. Father Franz has been telling us of his street experience, and of an extraordinary meeting with a woman in black, Frau Helver's visitor, without a doubt. When he repeated her last words, her prophecy, as she called it, he was struck with their new significance. Hear them, Count Scheffer, and judge for yourself: 'You will find her at last, safe and happy. Heed my words, trust to them, though they seem to brave fate, and beard truth itself.' What do you say sir?"

The count was, going over the words slowly and digestively.

He shook his head with an incredulous smile.

"Still more convincing is the little incident we have hitherto overlooked. This corpse that has been found in Tessa's clothing, undoubtedly the same clothing she wore that night of her disappearance. She wore that night, also, a red rose, which would fade into just such a sad plight as these remnants that have been found defying the action of wind and wave, still pinned at that dead girl's breast. There is a torn stem also in that beautiful hair. It is true that Tessa wore a red rose that evening in her hair, and at her breast. The poor little dressmaker cried out when she saw the stem still pinned in the ruined dress above the lifeless hair."

"But sir—Count Scheffer—will you please to think back a moment! Do you remember that when you took her from the baroness' beautiful parlour into the refreshment room the rose from her hair either

fell out or she took it out at your request, for she came back without it, and you had such a blossom in the button-hole of your coat."

"By Heaven, you are right! She leaned too far against a fringed curtain, and it was tangled in the rose spray, and then I begged it of her," exclaimed the count, starting forward impulsively.

"The rose at her breast she pulled out when she was in the carriage with me, and in her pretty impatience to reach home she pulled it to pieces, and strewed the fragments on the carriage floor," continued Konrad, with growing emphasis. "I tell you, sir, this corpse is put in our way, dressed as Tessa was, to settle for us the fiction of her death. The wicked person, whoever it may be, who is keeping Tessa from her friends, means that this discovery of the corpse shall end our thorough search, and silence all our suspicions."

"It may be, it may be," muttered the count, knitting his brow; "but the woman truly believed it to be she. Ah, and the mark—that fatal birth mark!" he exclaimed.

"I do not understand you," said Konrad, uneasily.

"Did you never know there was a peculiar mark on your friend's shoulder, a pink, nicely veined leaf? I saw it through the lace sleeve-trimming that night of the *fête*."

"Oh, yes!" exclaimed Father Franz, when she was a wee girlie she used to hold it up for me to kiss. Was that mark on this corpse?"

"It was. I looked for it immediately I reached the bier," replied the count.

"I will not be thrust back from the new hope," repeated Konrad, stoutly. "The fact that those roses are there to make up the appearance she had when she left us, must not lose its significance. Why should not the birth mark be counterfeited also?"

"Let us go and make sure," said the count promptly. Konrad, took a sponge and thrust it into his pocket, and the pair went off together.

"Herr Wohler drew himself closer to Gotthart's chair, and took in his thin, pale hand, and there the twain sat, looking wistfully into each other's faces, but speaking nothing until there came the sound of their friends' returning footsteps."

Konrad rushed up and fairly hugged them both, and the Count Scheffer stood behind, watching all with sparkling eyes, and a face lit up with a smile of renewed hope.

"False, false, like the rest, Father Franz. The mark washed off with careful sponging. It is not Tessa, else why must these things be counterfeited? We will find her yet."

"Now may Heaven be praised," sobbed Gotthart, falling upon the breast of the old *maestro*, and weeping there his tears of blessed relief.

"This is a very important discovery," pursued the count, wringing Konrad's hand again in the exuberance of his joy. "By all means let us hide the change in our belief, and, turning the tables upon them, we may keep the deceivers deceived. Positively no one but Herr Rosenberg and Meenart must know of this."

(To be continued).

BYRON IN BED.—Upon one occasion he found the poet in bed, with his hair *en papillote*, upon which Scrope cried, "Ha, ha! Byron, I have at last caught you acting the part of the Sleeping Beauty." Byron, in a rage, exclaimed, "No, Scrope, the part of a fool, you should have said." "Well, then, anything you please; but you have succeeded admirably in deceiving your friends, for it was my conviction that your hair curled naturally." "Yes, naturally, every night," returned the poet; "but do not, my dear Scrope, let the cat out of the bag, for I am as vain of my curls as a girl of sixteen."—*Gronow's Reminiscences.*

ITALIAN LOYALTY.—Italy expects an heir to her newly-born throne, and the artists of her principal towns vie with each other in their efforts to produce offerings of rare beauty and intrinsic value. Milan has presented to the future mother a coffer, embellished by sculpture and carving, imitated from those preserved in the ancient families of Piedmont as having contained the clothes of successive heirs apparent. Spoleto is meditating a cradle of wondrous beauty. Naples is already constructing one of coral tortoiseshell. Of the latter substance was that in which the Bearnaise Henri was first rocked, to whose character, by-the-bye, the grandfather of the unborn heir of Italy bears a certain similitude. The young and lovely Duchess of Aosta has recovered, and accordingly presents a necklace, fresh from Castellani's artisthands, to the Madonna. The mother of her Royal Highness was a Do Merode, sister, if we mistake not, of the Pope's Minister of War. Rome has ever advocated the poetic worship of the Virgin.

NOVEL PHOTOGRAPHIC INVENTION.—A recent in-

vention in Newark is calculated to work a great change in photography. By it all kinds of photographs are taken under the gaslight as successfully as by the aid of the brightest sun. The apparatus resembles a sort of miniature Turkish dome standing on the floor, about 6ft. high, 5ft. wide, and 6ft. long. In front of this stands a camera, and within a chair and a steady apparatus. Near the top, and at the left-hand front of this structure is a clock lamp for burning and feeding the magnesium wire that furnishes the light for the art purposes required in photography. In taking a picture the subject enters the rear of the structure and seats himself. The camera is adjusted, a match is applied to the magnesium wire, and a brilliant light results, which in half a minute produces as fine a picture as is ever made by daylight.

GOVERNMENT EDUCATIONAL INQUIRY.—In preparation for the bill for the improvement of the education of the people, which is to be submitted next session to Parliament, the Government is making an inquiry into the present supply and quality of such education within the municipal boroughs of Manchester and Liverpool. The commissioner, Mr. D. B. Fearon, who is appointed to conduct the inquiry in those two boroughs, will commence his operations in Manchester about the 20th. of November, and in the meantime he will receive information or suggestions from all persons interested in the subject. The schools to which this inquiry relates are, in the words of the address of the House of Commons, "All schools for the poorer classes of children, whether such schools are wholly or in part supported by taxation, private contributions or fees, and whether they be in the nature of asylums or day schools, provided that the fee, if any, charged at any such school do not exceed 1s. per week."

RAPIDITY OF THOUGHT IN DREAMING.—A very remarkable circumstance, and an important point of analogy is, says Dr. Forbes Winslow, to be found in the extreme rapidity with which the mental operations are performed, or rather with which the material changes on which the ideas depend are excited in the hemispherical ganglia. It would appear as if a whole series of acts, that would really occupy a long lapse of time, pass ideally through the mind in one instant. We have in dreams no true perception of the lapse of time—a strange property of mind! for if such be also its property when entered into the eternal, disembodied state, time will appear to us eternity. The relations of space as well as of time are also annihilated, so that while almost an eternity is compressed into a moment, infinite space is traversed more swiftly than by real thought. There are numerous illustrations of this principle on record. A gentleman dreamed that he had enlisted as a soldier, joined his regiment, deserted, was apprehended, carried back, tried, condemned to be shot, and at last led out for execution. After the usual preparations, a gun was fired; he awoke with the report, and found that a noise in the adjoining room had, at the same moment produced the dream and awakened him. A friend of Dr. Abercrombie dreamed that he crossed the Atlantic, and spent a fortnight in America. In embarking, on his return, he fell into the sea, and, awakening in the fright, found that he had not been asleep ten minutes.

THE WASP WAIST.—Men are not disposed, for a variety of reasons, to interfere rashly with the notions of women in the matter of dress. The greatest latitude is allowed in shape, colour, and material; and it is only when the male æsthetic sense is too openly outraged that we hear some faint protest against the current fashion. This tolerance is extremely wise. In the first place, women would not alter their ways even if we did complain. Then again, it is only reasonable to conclude that, as the women who set fashion spend by far the larger portion of their lives in studying how to dress themselves, they ought to understand more about it than the exoteric critic who hastily scans his wife's costume as she comes down to dinner. We are of opinion, further, that the masculine mind is incapable of dispassionately judging women's dress. There are men who look upon every tolerably good-looking woman as an angel; and such men, perceiving the majority of their angelic acquaintances dressing in a particular fashion, must needs consider the fashion a remarkably graceful and becoming one. There are other men who, having been rather hardly entreated by the sex, are disposed to regard women with distrust, if not with some vague notion of a universal revenge; and these find each new fashion only another phase of feminine absurdity and vanity. It is highly desirable therefore that women should be allowed (the phrase suggests a possible restriction which, we fear, does not exist) to dress pretty much as they please, and to adorn themselves with such combinations of colour, and such forms of costume, as they think most suited to their various requirements. In one direction,

however, every man who has got any sort of influence over the womankind of his family or circle is imperatively bound to interfere. The abomination of tight-lacing must not be allowed to spread amongst us. We are not quite sure that fashion contemplates any immediate return to the wasp waist, but there are rumours abroad which render it necessary that every precaution should be used.

USE OF COCCULUS INDICUS.—A German periodical has drawn attention to the fact that a very large quantity of *cocculus indicus* is annually imported into England, which would suffice for the adulteration of no less than one-fifth of the beer consumed in this country; and it is suggested that this fact gives considerable probability to the prevalence of adulteration of beer—especially London porter and stout—with that material. According to the statement of Lord E. Cecil, in the late discussion on the subject of adulteration, in the House of Commons, the quantity of *cocculus indicus* imported into England in 1867 amounted to 683 cwt.; in 1867, the quantity increased to 683 cwt.; and the last year it amounted to 1,064 cwt. This latter quantity is more than three times as much as the German authority above referred to has taken into account, so that, upon this view, it would be sufficient for the adulteration of three-fifths of the beer consumed in the United Kingdom. According to a statement of Professor Dragendorff, formerly chemist to St. Petersburg police, *picotoline*—the active principle of *cocculus indicus*—is largely used for adulterating beer in Russia; and it is a frequent occurrence that brewers are fined on this account, and the beer confiscated. Schubert of Wurtzburg also states that Bavarian beer is very often adulterated with *cocculus indicus*. It would appear, therefore, from these statements, that the use of *cocculus indicus*, for giving fictitious strength to beer, is a very general practice, and one, which, if it prevails to any extent in England, is not by any means peculiar to this country.

AMUSEMENTS.

We certainly burn a great deal more of the "midnight oil" than there is any occasion for in our latitude. The average duration of daylight is not so short as to require such prolonged artificial illuminations as we are in the habit of displaying. There is a great deal that we do which might be better done with much less expenditure of gas, tallow, wax, and kerosene. This is not only true of our business, but of our pleasures.

Our evening amusements always begin and end too late. The usual hours of our operatic, theatrical, and other entertainments are from eight to twelve o'clock. The consequence is, that those who frequent them are hardly in their beds before the next day begins to point. They are thus deprived of the quantity of sleep essential to health, which requires about eight hours of it for a grown-up person. The old may not want so much, but the very young demand a great deal more. Now, it is not age but youth which mainly indulges in these late amusements, and thus those to whom the most sleep is necessary get the least. Though there may be a few of these young people who can borrow from the day what they have spent on the night, the large majority have no such spare fund of time to draw upon. All that they give to the late entertainment they take from sleep, and their health suffers accordingly.

There is no more common cause of physical injury to our youth than late hours. In our large cities, at least, it is very rarely that a young man obtains all the sleep that is necessary for vigorous health. Unless he should be—which he seldom is—an heir of fortune, his occupation will not permit probably of his prolonging his stay in bed later than seven o'clock in the morning. To secure, then, the eight or nine hours of necessary sleep, he will be obliged to begin it as early as ten or eleven o'clock at night. We doubt whether there are ten in a hundred of our busiest young men who are fairly asleep before midnight. We are sure that the vast majority of them lose almost every night of their lives two hours at least of sleep. The loss is ordinarily more than the absolute time they are out of bed, for when wakefulness is unduly prolonged, a nervous restlessness is apt to ensue, which is fatal to soundness of slumber.

This prolongation of the day far into the night not only deprives us of the beneficent influence of natural sleep, but engenders in all the vital functions of the body a morbid activity which wastes and soon wears it out. No one can fail to have remarked, especially in the young, how all their faculties seem quickened when some unusual cause of wakefulness makes them forgetful of bedtime. Persons who are habitually stupid at ten o'clock, will thus become animated by an unwanted intelligence at midnight.

It is not only the intellectual faculties which are

stimulated by an inordinate wakefulness, but every corporeal organ is roused to an unnatural degree of activity. The appetites and desires are sharpened to an excessive eagerness, and their gratification becomes irresistible. For example, who has not observed how late hours provoke indulgence in eating and drinking? Who has not been conscious at the midnight supper of a hunger and thirst which the repasts of the day have failed to excite? This is of course a fastness of living fatal to good health and long life. By thus increasing its speed we shorten it. While doubling the days by adding the nights to them, we diminish proportionately their number.

It would be a great public benefit if we should adopt in this country the practice, which prevails in many parts of Germany, of opening the opera-houses, theatres, and other places of amusement at the early hours of five or six o'clock in the evening, and closing them at nine or ten. It would be no less a public benefit if our givers of private entertainments should abandon the absurd fashion of inviting our boys and girls to keep each other awake by jiggling together all night when their young limbs should be lying prostrate in bed. E. H.

MESMERIC EXPERIMENT.

A LADY'S boudoir, luxuriously furnished, the warm beams of an October sunset glancing through half-drawn curtains, tinged all with a soft, rosy light, peering into dark corners, illumining rare carvings, rich veined marbles, soft crimson hangings, made softer by the sunlight; and over all a certain air of refinement, that invisible yet unmistakable something which declares the occupant a woman—one of delicate and dainty tastes.

And at the window, in the shadow of the crimson damask, the woman herself; the one we would look for in such a room—young, beautiful, imperious; dark, dreamy eyes of purest haze—eyes that can melt or kindle, languish or flame; a form lithe and graceful; and a face an artist would go mad to paint, and, having painted, burn as a mere caricature of life and beauty. Such faces haunt the dreams of poets, and, should the ideal find its living counterpart, wreck the dreamers' lives.

Valerie Reeves, the woman sitting there lost in reverie, had been a plaything in the hands of fortune for the past five years. Born and reared in affluence, reverse had fallen upon her father's fortunes, swept away his possessions, shattered his hopes, and broken his heart. A man honourable and upright, Ralph Vernon had paid his creditors to the last shilling, retired from a proud mercantile position to comparative obscurity, and died two years later, leaving his wife, a hollow-hearted woman of the world, and their only child Valerie, penniless and unfriended. Now Mrs. Vernon reared her daughter, and brought her through a joyless girlhood to woman's estate it is not our purpose to enlarge upon. Suffice it to say that at eighteen Valerie Vernon, a proud and beautiful girl—proud in her poverty as her father had been in his wealth—was betrothed to Ralph Hayne, a young and gifted law-student—poor, like herself, but with a heart of iron, and devotedly attached to his beautiful fiancée.

There was the usual proportion of hopes and fears, mutual pledges and castle-building, and the happy pair looked forward with confidence to their wedding-day; but disappointment is said to be the lot of man. A rival for the hand of Valerie entered the field—a rival whose bank-account was plethoric and who wanted a woman of beauty and culture to preside over his household and entertain his guests. What though David Reeves's hair was somewhat grizzled, his temper soured, and his tastes of the earth—earthly? Wealth (or charity) covers a multitude of sins—it may be clarity, but wealth has equal claims to the proverb—and the sequel was but too apparent to the eyes of Philip. He saw and realized the worst. Too proud to demand the hand where the heart had grown cold, he gave her freedom back to Valerie, and in a month she married his rival. Alas, poor deceived lover! Alas, faithless Valerie! Hearts against diamonds, and with the old result.

Two years passed, and Valerie Reeves was a widow. David, her lord, had been gathered to his fathers, and his wife of two years found herself undisputed possessor of a handsome fortune. The ambition of the Vernons, mother and daughter, was satisfied. Wealth and position were theirs once more, at the price of a mere two years servitude. Yes, that is the word, for David Reeves was an arbitrary spouse—a Jupiter to whom no woman might play Juno with impunity. He ruled his wife, and stranger still, he ruled his mother-in-law. Mrs. Vernon bowed down to his wealth—Valerie to his brutality. But that, at least, was over. David slept in a family vault; the epitaph eulogistic, the funeral-sermon sufficiently ambiguous, the executors touchingly at-

tentive to the bereaved, the widow wore the most becoming mourning. All is well, David. *Requiescat in pace!*

Still another year had passed since then, and we have seen Valerie alone in her boudoir. Musing still, and clothed in weeds, her thoughts would have run like this:

"Are these tears upon my hand? Back, back, they are not for me! If tears could bring forgetfulness and rest, respite from this vain mourning, these eternal regrets, then might they flow for ever! Oh, untold weariness, if the end would but come! To sleep beneath the sod unruffled by a single care, oblivious of the past, save what might come in a half-hidden dream. Oh, Philip, Philip! It is retribution all, the inevitable doom! Hands without heart; love staked against ambition; self-immolation on the golden shrine; an hour of folly; an age of misery and atonement."

Strange musings these for a young and beautiful woman—the reigning sovereign of a wealthy and brilliant circle—are they not? Ah, Valerie, yours is but the bitter lesson daily learned by thousands.

A knock, and a servant enters with a card upon a salver.

She reads it.

"Philip Hayne, attorney-at-law."

"Does the gentleman wait, Robert?"

"Yes, madam."

"Say that I will be down presently."

No start, no perceptible flutter of a pulse, as she read the name of him who was as one dead to her for ever! No, she was prepared. She had seen him that morning the first time for many months. They had met in the street, bowed coldly, passed, and then, both actuated by a sudden impulse, had turned, touched hands, spoken kindly; and the result had been an invitation on her part—a promise to call on him.

She crossed the room and stood before the mirror. A new expression rested on her face, and in her eyes there shone a softened light—a stranger there for many weary, weary months!

He was awaiting her in the sumptuous drawing-room, and, as she entered, rose to meet her—a tall, manly figure, but little changed since they had stood as lovers and pledged their mutual troth. The meeting was an eventful one, yet both were calm to all outward appearance.

"Valerie?"

"Philip?"

She gave him both her hands, and drew him back into the seat he had vacated.

"I have kept my promise, you see," he said, after an embarrassing pause.

The thoughts of both were busy with the past.

They roused themselves and plunged at once into commonplace—she rattling on impetuously, he listening gravely, spaking but little. The topics of the day were passed, and then she questioned him of himself, his mended fortunes, his early aspirations. Here she laughed lightly, and spoke of castle-building.

"Old habit, Valerie," he said half-pityingly. "You then have learned to scorn such ethereal architecture?"

His clear, honest, but saddened eyes looked full into hers, as he spoke, and her reply came bitterly, almost despairingly.

"I have learned to scorn the world, mankind, myself."

There was a responsive bitterness in his voice, and the kind light left his eyes as he answered:

"A hard lesson, Valerie; there is still sympathy between us."

The words stripped off the mask that each had worn—the mask of social conventionality, and the two stood confronted. The erring, suffering woman who had sold her love for gold, the man whose happiness she had embittered, stood and realised their relative positions. She was the first to speak.

"You, too, have suffered, then? Oh, Philip, my friend, how terribly have I wronged you and myself!"

He smiled a bitter, mocking smile.

"Are you not happy, then?" he said.

"Happy! Oh, Heaven, be merciful."

It was cruel; but the man had suffered. Perhaps the cruelty was unintentional; but at the words so full of hidden meaning, she raised her hands, and with a wailing cry slid from the seat and buried her proud head in the velvet cushions at his feet. He rose, the hard, stern look quite gone; and lifting her gently, replaced her on the sofa, and looked at her with a sad, wistful gaze.

"Years," said he. "You can weep, then? I envy you; the flame those tears have power to quench in years consumes my heart to ashes. Valerie, our lives are sundered; your choice was freely made; why probe the wound beyond our power to heal? Look around you—wealth, splendour, luxury on

every side, yourself the arbitress and queen of all. Your dream is out; the regal sway you coveted is yours. Two wayward hearts that love might have redeemed were sacrificed; two lives unbittered; two souls impelled; and still the years roll on, and the one error that wrecked youth and happiness bears bitter fruit in season. Repentance cannot now atone; let the past, then, be buried, and for ever."

She lay there sobbing convulsively, and did not answer; no need for that. He comprehended all. The weak, girlish nature, dazzled by a dream of splendour, and urged on by an ambitious mother's counsels; the hasty marriage; the yearning, disappointed woman's heart that met no answering thrill; the gradual change from indifference to loathing; the waves of mad remorse that swept over the bowed spirit—he saw it all; and, above all, he saw with her the spectre of what might have been. A great compassion moved his inmost soul, and stooping to her side, he took up the passive hand and pressed it to his lips; then, in a voice as gentle as a woman's, said: "Heaven bless you, Valerie!" and was gone.

And she, proud woman, humbled now, erring but penitent, lay there and listened to his receding footsteps, and dared not call him back.

A week later there was a brilliant gathering at the Reeves mansion—the first since Valerie's reappearance in society. She had laid aside her widows' weeds; and to-night, in the subdued splendour of black and purple, a single diamond gleaming in her hair, she looked and moved a queen among her guests. All acknowledged her sway—youth and age, the giddy votary of fashion, and the sedate student. Hers was an undisputed reign—an absolute sovereignty.

She had been singing, and as she turned from the piano the bevy of admirers, who had hung entranced upon her rich contralto tones, crowded around to praise, to flatter, to gain a moment's monopoly upon any and every pretext; and she accepted it all, graceful and self-possessed, even as a queen receives the homage of her subjects, conscious of her power and relying upon it.

Among the many who swelled her brilliant train was one of whom she entertained a secret dread, a vague emotion—neither fear nor admiration, yet partaking strangely of both. He fascinated yet repelled her; she shuddered at his touch yet his glance held her spellbound. It was the fascination of the serpent, that holds the victim powerless while it strikes—a dark, impenetrable man, Hugh Walraven by name, an adventurer, doubtless, yet countenanced in the best society, a Cagliostro in principle, a Chesterfield in polish, a man of the world, keen, subtle, and profound; and, to crown all, an acknowledged mesmerist. Such attributes and powers, in the hands of honest men and exercised for good, might have led to grand results. In the hands of Hugh Walraven, they were incalculably potent for evil.

As he among the rest approached her, Valerie experienced that intuitive shrinking, that undefined terror which prompts the bird to shun the the approaching snake; but, like the bird, she was powerless against the influence. She met those basilisk eyes, full of slumberous fire, baleful yet beautiful, and she succumbed to the spell. He paid her some trite compliment; nothing in itself; but the crowd drew back, as when a lion stalks among hinds. One only, a haughty young Croesus, unused to having his domains invaded, turned carelessly, and with an air of well-bred superciliousness, said:

"Mr. Walraven is descending to the material world. I thought his mind soared to loftier and more spiritual ends!"

Walraven turned his eyes, those wondrous eyes, full on the speaker, and in low, deep tones, replied:

"The links, sir, that bind the material to the spiritual, the visible to the invisible world may be closer than is supposed by those whose natures are clogged by ignorance and prejudice. The air around us, the boundless space in which we move and breathe, is filled with the flutter of invisible wings, and myriads upon myriads from the unknown shores share, and, perhaps, control our destinies!"

There was something unique and *outré* in such a speech at such a time and place. All eyes were turned to the speaker, and the buzz of conversation died away.

"Your belief, sir," said Valerie, "if not quite self-evident, is at least fascinating."

"All knowledge, madam," replied Walraven, "is fascinating to reflecting minds. The yearning for the unattainable, for that which is beyond, is implanted in every human soul. Magnetism is the great medium of the universe. Without it all were chaos."

It was with a certain hesitancy in her voice that Valerie answered:

"You have pursued the study of that science with some success, I believe. Can you not give us an illustration of its power?"

"Do you desire it?" asked Walraven, quickly.

Again that hesitation in voice and manner as she replied:

"Sincerely, I have always had a great curiosity on the subject. The feeling, I have no doubt, is general. What say you, gentlemen?"

A constrained murmur of assent ran through the company; the ominous murmur which portends a coming storm.

"You shall be gratified, madam," said Walraven. And his eyes gleamed with a furtive light that looked very like triumph. Turning to the curious throng, he resumed: "I shall show you a simple phenomenon, my friends, effected by a mere exercise of will. Madame herself (if she will permit me), shall be so controlled as to—but you shall see. Be so kind as to meet my eye for—for a moment, madame, so—"

She stood facing him, an odd, preoccupied thoughtfulness in her face, and as the last words left his lips she slightly shivered, cast a troubled, helpless look around, and, with a forced smile, sank into a seat and met his eyes once more.

Slowly they saw her face grow fixed and rigid, the blood forsake her cheeks, and her fall lustrous eyes dilate before his steady gaze. He moved a step backward, another and another still until a dozen paces lay between them, then reaching for a book that lay upon the table near him he opened it, his eyes still fixed on hers, and holding it high above his head, the page turned from her, addressed her with one word:

"Read!"

"Night shadows the earth, and darkness reigns supreme. Light lives beyond, and he who lifts the veil shall see its glory settle round himself, an aureole of immortality."

The words had issued from Valerie's lips, but not another muscle of her body moved. She stood as if turned to stone. Walraven crossed to the attentive group.

"Has she read correctly?" said he, coldly presenting the page for their inspection. An exclamation of incredulous astonishment escaped from one and all. Line for line, letter for letter, they were the very words.

He seemed to ignore their amazement, then resumed with a calm and haughty smile: "Allow me to show you a further manifestation; madam is entirely subservient to my will; with your approval I will now compel her to follow me from place to place, to next room, the conservatory, where I will—!" Then, turning toward the unconscious sleeper: "Come!" he said:

At this moment a tall, manly figure strode a single pace into the room, and stopped at the door, silent and unnoticed.

"Come!" said the mesmerist, beckoning with his outstretched hand.

Valerie remained motionless. Walraven smiled a cold and icy smile.

"Your pardon, friends, said he. "It is merely a temporary resistance. Her will is lost in mine. Come!"

Still she did not stir. Something was evidently wrong. Walraven cast an angry, searching glance around, as if in search of some concealed antagonist.

"This is probably a jest," said he, "unless, indeed, an insult. But it will not avail. Such presumption is impotent as it is ill-timed. Come!" to Valerie, "you dare not resist me. Come!"

A convulsive shudder ran through Valerie's frame, but otherwise there was no motion, a marble image would have seemed less immovable. The spectators were variously affected. Some exchanged anxious whispers, others indignant glances, a few of the ladies grew hysterical. It was but for an instant, however, and all eyes were rivetted upon the two main actors in this strange drama.

Walraven stood in a superb attitude, a study for a sculptor, his head thrown back, his right arm and hand extended, his eyes two living flames, and his whole form a realisation of Satanic pride and arrogance, while from his lips fell once more that stern command:

"Come!"

Again that fierce convulsion passed through Valerie's frame, her form swayed to and fro, her face grew livid, the features working horrible, her whole being writhing with some internal anguish, and an inaudible shriek seemingly frozen on her lips. Men were involuntarily starting forward, women were fainting—all in commotion and confusion—when, above the murmur of many voices one was heard whose vibrating tones startled the ear like a sharp bugle-blast, bold, clear, and ringing.

"Valerie, awake!"

The spell was broken. She turned as at the voice of an archangel, stretched out her arms towards the voice and fell, with a loud, glad cry, at the feet of Philip Hayne.

There was a moment's pause, a muttered impression, a confused stir, and Hugh Walraven was gone.

"Checkmate, gentlemen," said Philip, calmly, as the bewildered faces surged around him. "Simple checkmate—nothing more."

A month from this there was a happy wedding, and Philip and Valerie were the bride and groom.
D. R.

THE PUBLIC CLOCK THAT STRUCK THIRTEEN AT MIDNIGHT.

Most people have heard something about the tradition that a soldier, whilst on guard at Windsor Castle, during the reign of William III., declared that he heard the clock of St. Paul's Cathedral strike thirteen at midnight. Here is the original story—not generally known—from *The Public Advertiser* of Friday, June 22, 1770:

"Mr. John Hatfield, who died last Monday at his house in Glasshouse Yard, Aldersgate, aged 102, was a soldier in the reign of William and Mary, and the person who was tried and condemned by a court-martial for falling asleep on his duty upon the Terrace at Windsor. He absolutely denied the charge against him, and solemnly declared that he heard St. Paul's clock strike thirteen, the truth of which was doubted by the Court, because of the great distance. But, while he was under sentence of death, affidavit was made by several persons that the clock actually did strike thirteen instead of twelve; whereupon he received his Majesty's pardon. The above his friends caused to be engraved on his plate, to satisfy the world of the truth of a story which had been much doubted, through he had often confirmed it to many gentlemen, and, a few days before his death, told it to several of his neighbours. He enjoyed his sight and memory to the day of his death."

TRUE LOVE AND FALSE.

CHAPTER I.

"EVERYTHING is arranged to our mutual satisfaction, I believe, neighbour Garrick?"

"I'm suited, Mr. Bartholmæ."

"The young people will, one of these days, own the finest piece of property I know of."

"The finest by all odds for twenty miles."

"Ah, you and I will know very little about it then. I suppose. Well, well, the old must die, and the young take their places. Give me your hand, neighbour. Mrs. Garrick, perhaps you will not be offended if I remark to your husband, that if your daughter resembles you as much inwardly as outwardly, I have no doubt but that my son will be the happiest man in Christendom."

Mrs. Garrick blushed, and put her kerchief to her eyes, which were full of tears.

Mr. Garrick arose.

"I'm not much of a hand for compliments, neighbour Bartholmæ," he said. "Haven't the faculty nor the habit of talking that you have. I'm only a plain farmer, and you've been a lawyer all your life. But if I didn't think well of you and of your son, and didn't think he'd make my Gracie happy, why, I'd not give her to him. Here, Barney—Barney, I say, bring in a pitcher of cider, and something else. Well, well, mother, you'll see to it, will you? Heaven bless her! this makes her think of old times, you see, and she's glad to get away to cry a bit."

Then the two men waited, leaning over the table-strewn with papers, ink, pens, and sealing-wax, and handling the compacts they had signed and sealed as though they loved them.

"There was none of this work when I married Betsy," said the farmer. "I had very little. I'd saved that myself. As for Betsy, why, she had nothing. We're not ashamed of it, neighbour. She was the prettiest girl I ever saw. Grace is nothing like so lovely. Her cheeks are not so red, nor her smile so bonny. And as for good, sometimes I think I've got the only good woman in the world."

"Maybe you have," said the lawyer, looking down. "He had memories of which the farmer knew nothing. His wife, the mother of his only boy, had left him years before, leaving her baby in the cradle; and all he ever knew was, that a younger and a handsomer face had won her fancy. His faith in women was not very great. Men generally judge all women by the very worst one they ever happened to know. He looked down, trifling with the many seals upon his watch chain, his cheeks flushing red above his white moustache with the painful memories which had stalked ghost-like out of the past."

Farmer Garrick, quite unconscious of all this—ah, how little we know of the hearts of those into whose eyes we look, whose very hands we touch!—Farmer Garrick went on riding his hobby, as was his wont when he had once mounted it.

"Yes, I began on nothing, neighbour Bartholmæ,

and now I'm worth a cool half million. This farm can't be beat, though I say it; and I lay all that luck half to Betsy. She put her shoulder to the wheel with me. She helped me. A helpmeet as the Lord meant a wife to be she was. When I see folks waiting to be married until they are rich, I think what fools they are, to be sure. Like my oxen out there, there's more power in a team than in a single one. A man works better when he's working for wife and babies, and a wife like my Betsy. But there she comes, and she won't let me praise her before folks. Only I'll tell you this, neighbour, I never listened in all her courting days for her step as I listen now. I never thought her face so sweet as I think it now. The touch of her hand is dearer now than it ever was; and a wife must be a good wife, let me tell you, to make that heaven's truth after five-and-twenty years."

"She must," sighed the lawyer, rather to himself than to his neighbour, and he could not look up yet. There was truth in womanhood and constancy, and it had fallen to this farmer's share; but not to his—oh, not to his!

Mrs. Garrick came in at that moment, followed by Barney with a tray—Barney, whose Irish eyes twinkled, whose Irish mouth was on the full grin, who winked and nodded all round with an air of mysterious copartnership in the family affairs, and who deposited his burden on the table with a flourish. He was an odd creature, this Barney, blundering and comic, sympathetic and affectionate, yet with what he called a "devil of a temper," and an unconscious aptitude for plunging everyone who had anything to do with him into unexpected scrapes. As for himself, his life was one long scrape and blunder. On this occasion, however, he neither oversteered the tray nor trod on anyone's toes, and appeared and retired without accident.

Mrs. Garrick, greatly relieved thereby, allowed her lips to soften into a merry smile, which brought out the lurking dimples in her plump cheeks, and betook herself to her duties of hostess forthwith.

"We ought to call the children," said Mrs. Garrick.

"Nay, nay," said Mr. Bartholmæ. "Let them stay under the trees on this betrothed night of theirs. They may never be so happy again."

"I thought so when I asked a pretty girl to be my wife long ago," said William Garrick; "but even happier times came to us—eh, wife?"

The little woman put her hand upon her husband's shoulder. The lawyer turned away. He looked at the moonlight stealing through the still open window, at the mystic shadows of the trees without. He listened to the far-off cry of some night-bird flitting among the branches. He leaned against the small-paneled sash, fastened by an old-fashioned button, and his hand crept over his heart, beating too fast and furious for such an old one. His own windows were of costly plate glass, but who watched from them for his coming? Within his elegant rooms were rare pictures, books, music, but no woman ever sang to him—no woman ever listened while he read to her. Servants served him, and well, but the heart of home, the wife, was not there. He had never actually had a wife. That darling beauty who, with all her charms, had no true womanhood in her soul, had been that to him which might satisfy a Turk in the beauty of his harem, but not a pure and loving wife.

A while he let the sorrow of his soul keep possession of him. Then he returned to the table.

"Come, neighbour," he said; "let us drink a toast; let me give it: 'The betrothed pair—may they always be as happy as they are to-night.'"

"Amen," said the farmer. And the toast was drunk.

Just then light steps and clear young voices were heard without. The parents' eyes were turned towards the door, and they entered—Grace Garrick and Adolph Bartholmæ. It was years since his French ancestors had left their native land, but the French names clung to the family still. Much of the French look too; the dark complexion, the low stature, the airy grace, the politeness which seems involuntary, never forced.

He advanced at once to Mrs. Garrick and took her hand. He pressed it softly.

"You are looking so well to-night," he said, "so charmingly. You are rid of your cold I think."

And then they talked in cosy, pleasant fashion, for Mrs. Garrick loved Adolph as though he had been her own son.

She touched his crisp curls with her plump hand once or twice as he sat on the low stool at her feet. She thought to herself how good a contrast he was for her pretty Grace, who was fair as any lily, tall and slender, and delicate. A broad breast this to lean upon, stout arms to shelter her from life's storms, and then both were so well endowed by fortune. The cares of poverty could never approach them. Why should not they be happy? Happy as mortals could be. Why not?

So the evening passed away. They talked, they joked, they laughed. Grace sang a little love song to an old Scotch tune, one of those the fairies must have made *langsyne*, in their rings amidst the heather; and Adolph looked at her the while, doubtless, so the mother thought, thinking of her beauty. When it was time to part the old folks good-naturedly sauntered down the path together, leaving the girl and her lover to follow. Grace, shy and blushing, hardly looked up into Adolph's face as they walked on. It was well she did not, such a cloud had crept over it—such a deep furrow lay between the eyes—such a strange expression in the eyes themselves for those of a lover.

She was too quietly happy to desire to talk. He did not speak. Under a great elm he paused and took her hand.

"Good night," he said.

"Good night, Adolph," she whispered.

Then he bent over and kissed her. His lips were icy cold, though it was midsummer.

"Adolph!" she cried, in the sudden terror of her woman's heart; "you are not well."

He tried to laugh.

"Perhaps not quite," he said; "but why?"

"Your lips are cold and your hands," she said.

"They tremble too. Ah, Adolph, and you look strangely too."

"Are you quite calm to night?" he asked.

"I never felt so calm, so happy," she said.

"Then to be calm is to be happy, with you?" said Adolph.

She smiled upon him, and said "Of course."

He sighed—a sigh with something of relief in it—but he turned his face away from her quiet eyes.

They stood quiet still for a while, then he suddenly clasped both little hands.

"Grace, my sweet, good girl," he said, "purest of the pure, may this calm happiness of yours remain for ever. Oh, Heaven, if I could only be sure grief or pain would never come near you! If I could only be sure of that."

He trembled violently as he spoke. His face paled; even in the moonlight she could see it. He did not touch her lips again, but he caught her hands and showered kisses on them. They seemed, though she did not know it, penitential kisses, and his prayer was not only that of an anxious and adoring lover.

"He is so fond of me," thought the girl. "Men have stronger feelings than we. Ah, how I love him!" But she only smiled softly up into his eyes, and repressed, as was her wont, the warmer feelings that throbbed within her bosom—feelings that, to her Puritan way of thinking, seemed almost wrong, at least unmaidenly.

"Adolph," cried a voice at the gate. "Ah, how these lovers forget hours! They try the patience of dull old folks like me. Adolph, my boy."

"Then good-bye again, Grace," said Adolph; but he did not kiss her this time, not even her hands, and hurried away, leaving her under the elm-tree watching him.

She liked to watch him. His gay, springy step, the toss of his curled head, the beautiful outline of his rounded figure, charmed her beyond expression. She had never said to anyone, "He is beautiful," but his beauty filled her very heart.

Now a thought stole through her mind that made her blush, and smile, and catch her breath with a little shiver; and she turned away and hurried into the house, and to her own room, desiring nothing so much as to be quite alone on this betrothed night of hers.

She shut the door and sat down upon the floor beside the window, with her head upon the sill. The moon was just above the horizon. It seemed to smile at her.

"I think I shall be very happy," she said to herself. "He is so good, so handsome, so fond of me. We will love each other as my father and mother have loved all their lives. Dear, dear, dear, Adolph."

Then she just sat and watched the moon, hardly thinking at all, drifting down a sea of happiness that had no ripple. Some time after, when all the house was still, she undressed herself, and, having said her prayers, with a special clause in them for Adolph, laid her head upon her pillow and slept the sweet sleep of maiden hope and innocence.

And Adolph? Ah, there was no sleep for him that night. He kept vigil through all his lingering hours, and saw the moon set and the gray dawn creep up the sky, and golden daybreak come at last, and wondered if beneath the summer sky dwelt one so wretched as himself.

CHAPTER II.

WHILE on this lovely summer morning, Grace, following her mother into the sweet dairy, took lessons

in housewifely duties, thinking all the while of the time when she would prove herself a good mistress in her husband's house, Adolph had mounted his horse, and ridden cityward.

He did not heed the pleasant scenes through which he passed. He scarcely saw the road itself. The river might have been turbid and yellow instead of clear and blue; the foliage on its banks dusty and burnt, instead of fresh and green with summer showers; the villas and fine country-seats so many battered shanties, for all his care for them. He only desired to pass them by and reach his destination. He accomplished his desire at last, and was at the door of a pretty hotel and had tossed his reins to a boy and hurried into the broad hall. A waiter standing there bowed; with the bow of recognition a pleased look on his face too, brought there by memories of loose coin freely lavished by this guest.

The waiter was a Frenchman; indeed, it was a French hotel, as completely as though its foundations had rested on Parisian soil.

Adolph spoke in the language which all the Bartholmæes used as freely as their native tongue.

"Madame is at home?"

"Yes, monsieur."

"And in her own apartment?"

"Yes, monsieur."

Adolph hurried up the stairs. At a door on the first landing he paused. Within he caught the trill of a little French nursery song. He tapped at the door.

"Come in," cried a voice.

He opened it. A little rapturous scream followed, and the most beautiful and *petite* of Frenchwomen flung herself into his arms.

She was not eighteen. She was a brunette, and sparkling. She had, with a girl's grace and lightness, a matron's fullness of contour; and that she was a matron the screams and crows of the child in the dainty cradle testified.

"Mamma, mamma," cried the baby, "mamma."

Then the little woman caught the baby up.

"See, papa," she cried. "No, thou shalt not go to sleep, *ma petite*—not stupidly to sleep, when papa is here. Oh, how long you have been absent! I died of *ennui*. Yes, I died—only your coming brought me to life again. I could not read; I could not sew; I could not sing, except to baby. I said he has forgotten all about me, and I wept. Yes, I cried my heart out. But you had not forgotten, for you are here. I meant to be cold, to let you see I also could forget; but—but I cannot act. I love you too well. Something important has kept you away. Is it not so, dearest?"

"If I could have come to you, I would," said Adolph; "you know that, little wife. And if you had guessed how wretched I have been, you would not have thought of being cruel to me. Oh, Manette, I am so unhappy!"

She clasped her arms about him.

"Unhappy!" she said. "Oh, why?"

"The same old story," he whispered; but it is coming to an end—it is coming to any end. I am such a coward, and such a fool, my darling."

"Only you should say that to me," said Manette. "But, tell me. Oh, I have been jealous of that girl, I have. Then you have told them at last how you hate her. You—"

"I have no reason to hate poor Grace," said Adolph. "It is my fault, not hers; but I have not told them anything yet, Manette. There lies my trouble. Oh, I am such a coward! And I shall do so much harm in every way—to Grace, to you, to my father, to myself."

"Harm to me!" cried Manette. "But what harm to me?"

Adolph hid his face on her shoulder, as she sat upon his knee.

"You know what poverty is, *ma petite*?" he asked or asserted.

"Know—none better!" cried the wife. "See you, it was all poverty with me until I married you—poverty from the time when I danced to the scraping of grandpapa's fiddle, and afterwards held his cap for the pennies—oh, so few—that came to us in the streets of Paris, to the day when monsieur the manager engaged me. Then, to be sure, I danced on the stage in fine clothes, but it was poverty still—poverty, poverty. Many a time when I have been queen of the fairies behind the footlights I have gone home half-hungry. And, oh! my wardrobe, how I patched and mended! I often wonder can this be I, with all I need, all I even wish for, with my husband, my baby, my beautiful home! And you have given all this to me, Adolph."

He drew her closer to him.

"And if I should take them all away?"

She smiled into his eyes, and shook her head coquettishly.

"I am in earnest," said Adolph. "I may become a poor man. I may be unable to give you these

beautiful things, at least for a while. Will you hate me?"

"I think you say this to try me," she said; "but I will answer in very earnest. If poverty should come to us you will be only dearer to me because you will have suffered. I will help you all I can. I will work for you. I will even return to the stage and dance as I did—"

"Hush!" cried Adolph. "Never that, never that, my darling, while I can find the coarsest labour that will gain you bread. Oh, Manette, if I had been a poor man's son, I should have been far richer than I am now. I have had no trade, no profession given me. I am unable, at five and twenty, to say by what means I will drive the wolf from the door, if the worst comes to the worst. And it is coming fast, Manette. Listen, sweetest, best, most beautiful, I will tell you all my story. You shall know what a coward I am, what an idiot—how I have gone on waiting for chance to free me, until I am involved in meshes which will strangle me in the breaking. Already you know something. You shall know all—yes, all, Manette, every word."

"My father is a lawyer. Also a great landholder. He inherited money from his parents, I believe. There were estates in France which he sold. I know not what. The end of it is, that with his profession, his inheritance, and his good luck, he has become one of the wealthiest men in England."

"Where our farm lies, lie also the acres of William Garrick, a good old farmer, who is also very wealthy. In my childhood I had no mother, my darling."

"Poor little one!" she sighed, caressing him.

"In my childhood Mrs. Garrick was very kind to me. I love her dearly for it, though she will not believe that I have any gratitude in my heart when the truth comes out. She did all she could to make me a good boy; she gave me toys and baked cakes for me; she took me to church with little Grace, one holding either hand. Through the pleasant weekdays, until I went to boarding-school, I played with Grace, a little lily of a child, fair and sweet. I used to kiss her and call her my 'little wife.' Manette, it was but child's play. What do babies know of love?"

Adolph's wife nestled closer to him and hid her face upon his shoulder. She forgot even the baby in the cradle. A little touch of jealousy brought a tiny line between her straight, black eyebrows, that seemed like the promise of a frown.

"Little one," whispered Adolph.

"I am listening," she said, "only you call her a lily too often."

"Yes," said Adolph. "But in the garden one passes the lily with, 'Ah, how beautiful!' but when one meets the rose, one must gather it; nothing else suffices. She is a lily, darling, but you are a queen rose of the rose-bud garden of girls." Yes. I went away—I went to school, to college; after, to travel on the continent. When I returned Grace was a woman. She was very lovely, very good. I had yet seen no one I liked better than herself. When my father said, 'Adolph, when you give me a daughter-in-law I hope it will be Grace Garrick,' I said, 'I think it will be, father.' So you see, I committed myself; I bowed my neck to the yoke, fancying it to be made of flowers. It has proved itself of iron. The thing was understood in the family. Grace liked me well enough. Bah! she is too good to love. I do not trouble myself about that. We were very happy in brother and sisterly fashion. I might have married her and been content, but I came to London one winter and saw you. At first I only thought of your beauty; but I went behind the scenes and saw you there, pure when so many were impure, good amidst all temptations. I knew of your toil and struggles. I pitied you, I admired you, I loved you. I forgot all else. To free you from such a life was my desire—to claim you for my own, my fondest hope. I sought your hand; you gave it to me and we were married. I forgot Grace Garrick completely."

"At last I went home to see my father. 'This was his salutation:'

"Adolph, I do not wonder that you could leave a stupid old father so long alone, but how have you lived without a glimpse of your lady-love? A cold lover you are. My blood was warmer at your age."

"Then I should have spoken; might have said: 'I am not Grace Garrick's lover,' might have confessed all. I had not courage. To-night, I thought, I will tell my father, and went to visit Grace. No, I did not make love to her. We have always kissed at parting since we were babies; there our love-making begins and ends. But I spent the evening with Grace and her family, and then I said, 'I will tell my father to-morrow.' I have never told him yet. His allowance to me is very liberal, else I could not deceive him as I do. Sometimes he says to me, 'Adolph, I think you are a little extravagant. You must be more prudent when you are a married man,' but he gives me my own way. Meanwhile, things have

gone on more rapidly than I thought they could; for I, you may be sure, have not hastened them. Manette, the worst is to be told. Yesterday they actually pledged us to each other; they, the two fathers, drew up certain agreements concerning our possessions."

"Grace is an only child, as I am. And the day for our wedding is set, and still, still, I have not told them. Oh! Manette, I deserve this. Yes, I deserve that look from you. Yet it is for your sake that I have kept silence. My father will be too justly indignant with me to forgive me. He will cut me off, refuse my allowance, blot my name from his will, cast me on my own resources, and for a while, at least, you must suffer. Heaven knows to what poor lodging I must take you, how wretched may be your fare. I wait, hoping for something to intervene which may palliate my offence in my father's eyes, and all the while I know that nothing of the kind can happen, that there can only one end to all this. Then there is Grace, a good and beautiful young lady, for whom I have a great regard; yet I offer her an irreparable insult; perhaps I bitterly wound her gentle heart, for in her own calm way she loves me."

"Her father has been my kind, good friend; her mother almost my mother; and I—I dare to trifle with their daughter's affections, and make her the talk and wonder of the village gossips. I have, to her belief, courted Grace for three long years. I have permitted the day of our wedding to be fixed. I appear—yes, I am a scoundrel of the first water. Yet I do it all because I cannot bear to plunge you into poverty. Oh, Manette, do not hate me. I hate myself."

"I never could hate you!" cried Manette; "but oh, Adolph, better anything than this. Proclaim me your wife; tell your father the truth; and let us, rather beg our bread together than—than—Oh! Adolph, I cannot bear to think that they even believe that you will be another woman's husband. Go—go and tell them. Poverty! what is poverty? we have love; and your father is a good man—no tyrant; he will forgive us. I will tell him it was all my fault. I will show him our beautiful boy. Oh! Adolph, let me go to him; let me tell him!"

And Manette wept upon her husband's shoulder. Great tears were in his brown eyes also. That cowardly heart of his was yet warm.

"My little darling," he said, "you do not quite know my father. Of all things he will find it the most difficult to forgive me for having married—forgive me for saying it—for having married the sweetest little dancer in the world. Could I say, 'she is this or that rich or great man's daughter,' it would be easier; but—a dancer! There, Mignonette—you have it now."

"He is proud, then," said Manette.

"In one way very."

"Need we tell him?"

"We could not hide it," said Adolph. "It would be of no avail to attempt to do so. Besides, I will have done with deception. The burden of a lie is very great, acted or spoken. Henceforth, when once the truth is out, I will keep to it. No, sweet, it must come—the anger, the penalty, the anxious hours of toil and poverty. Only love me through it all. Love me, wicked as I have been, for I love you, my wife, with all my soul. I would die for you, Manette—for you and for our child."

"Live for us," sobbed Manette. "Do not speak of dying. We will be happy, very happy, you and I. But go—go quickly, and tell Grace that you do not love her. Go—she thinks it now—she—and I am your wife."

"Poor Grace," sighed Adolph. "Ah, you cannot be angry with her, Manette. She is innocent, and I have wronged her deeply."

Manette shook her head.

"Yes, it is wrong, I know," she said; "very wrong of course; but I hate her just a little. After a while I will pity her; but not now, not now. I cannot. Go, tell her 'I have a wife; I love her. I never loved you.' Go." She pushed him toward the door still repeating, "Go, go, go."

"But I have had no lunch, Manette, and I have not kissed baby. I will go, but not yet."

"No, not yet," she said. "I did not mean that."

Then she made him sit down in the great easy-chair, and gave him the baby to hold, kissed him, and rang the bell for lunch.

Afterwards they were as merry over it, in their own light-hearted fashion, as though no trouble could approach them.

Oh, happy, happy hours, they glided away so fast! And evening drew on, and there was dinner; so he must not go before that. And afterwards, in the twilight, she sang to him—sang those sweet, meaningless French songs that took all their meaning from her lips and eyes, and the sweetness of her voice; and then it was night.

There was some celebrated guest at the hotel that

night, and in the night admirers came to serenade him. The music was exquisite, dreamy, love-laden, sad with the sadness that is only a deepest depth of joy, and in the silences of midnight they listened to it.

"It says all that my heart feels, that I have no words for," whispered Manette.

"It is my soul talking to you, Manette," said Adolph.

And they thought only of the music and their own love; they forgot all else.

Meanwhile, far away, Grace Garrick sat at her little window—the small-paned window on the second-floor, whence she could see the handsome house of old Bartholmæ over his garden gate—and watched the moon and stars. Her heart was full of sweet dreams, and gentle hopes of the future. She was not altogether sorry that she saw so little of Adolph. Just now something made her shy of him. After a while she would dare to let him see how well she loved him, not now. It was her chief pleasure at this time to sit and think of him. To the right hand, looking through the trees, she could discover the pretty cottage *orase* which her father had had built for them, with its garden so tastefully laid out, so full of all rare flowers.

It was not furnished yet; that was to be the task of the coming week. They would be close together, her parents and herself—that was so happy. And yet, their own home seemed to have a charm about it. Special comforts and conveniences for Adolph ran in her mind as she thought of the furnishing. She was to have servants, but she would prove herself a housewife nevertheless. Oh! a thousand things she would do. Some day she would be busier. Some day—

Grace suddenly caught the white curtain in her hands, and wrapped her head and face quite up in it. She was ashamed that the night should see her, and the quiet stars, for the thought had been in her mind—ah, what a pure, natural, innocent thought, after all—that some day the children of Adolph should call her "mother."

Oh, Grace! Grace Garrick! at this instant the man of whom you dream pillows upon his bosom the cheeks of the woman who has been his wife for two long years—thinks of her only, loves her only—forgot you save in some faint shudder of remorse, as though you were not.

You shall blush other blushes than these sweet ones, remembering your maiden thoughts, ere many nights are numbered, poor Grace Garrick.

CHAPTER III.

BARNEY was very busy in the long dining-room at the Garricks' farm-house, polishing the old mahogany furniture with waxed cloths and "elbow grease." While he polished he sung, or hummed rather, snatches of the ballads that had been his delight as a boy in "old Ireland." In other portions of the house the women servants were busy, but he had this room to himself.

If Barney had a weakness, it was a love of cider. On the sideboard in a recess, stood a pitcher of this beverage, the oldest and strongest in the cellar, which he had drawn for his own particular refreshment. Every now and then he crossed the room, and lifting the pitcher to his lips, took a great draught—no other word expresses it—and returned to his labour.

Meanwhile, without the window some one stood watching him—a coarse man, with eyes that had a furtive, unreliable look in them—eyes that would not meet your own, as you would guess, for any consideration—a man with a face at once mean and brutal, strongly built, but with a heavy, slow, unwieldy way of moving, as though he were more in the habit of slouching about than working for his living. He wore a jacket, patched trousers, a red shirt, a battered cap, and carried over his shoulder a walking-stick, from which suspended a bundle tied up in a red pocket handkerchief.

We say he watched Barney but this was, after all, not just what he was doing. He seemed only to make sure that Barney did not watch him as he took a mental inventory of every article of furniture in the room; of every closet, drawer, and shelf; of the glass set out upon the sideboard; of the little reticule upon a chair—of everything, to the very kitten playing on the hearth-rug.

After a while, seemingly contented with his survey, he coughed aloud, and with his fingers rapped upon the window frame. Barney looked up.

"Who's that?" he cried; "an' what are ye after wanting there?"

"Nothing but a civil word. You needn't be so sharp about it. I don't come a-begging," said the man.

"An' if ye did, who took ye ye'd have gone away empty-handed from the like of us?" said Barney.



[THE PARTING OF THE BETROTHED.]

"We're not that kind, An' I wasn't sharper than jest the start made me, that I know iv. What is it ye are wantin' thin? I can be as civil as the next man, I'm thinkin'!"

"Only the way to the 'Labourers' Rest,'" said the man.

"The bit of a tavern for working men," said Barney. "Well, jest take the road to yer right and kape it till ye see the sign. You're looking for work belike?"

"Many a poor man is doing the same, then," said the stranger.

"Thru for ye," said Barney. "Come now, take a glass iv cider, and set down and discorse a bit. There's only us in the house; the gentlefolks are all away. Set down, set down."

The traveller, nothing loth, complied, and Barney filled a glass with cider, and handed it to him.

"I'm not doing it on the sly," he said. "The masher is as free wid the the stuff as wather. It's our own make, from our own apples, and it's good enough whin there's no whisky, and that there isn't in this house. It's agin the masher's principles."

"Thank you kindly," said the stranger. "This is better than strong drink, for honest men like us."

"Thru for ye," said Barney. "Bedad it is. Not but what I like a sup at times, and I'm thinking there'll be may be, af not that, wius or the like aven here, the day of the wedding. It's fitting there should, such a wedding as that'll be."

"Who is to be married? you yourself?" asked the man.

"None o' your joking," said Barney. "Sure it's our young lady. She's to step off in a week's time; that's what makes us all so busy. The purtiest crayther iver ye saw, she is; an' the only child we have. We've rared her decent. The iddication she has would surprise ye, and more betoken, there's nothing under the sun she can't do iv a dimistic nature. Well rared she is; we've brought her up decent, the masher an' musses an' me."

"And handsome, too, you say," said the traveller.

"Handsome! But ye've niver seen her. She's a pictur; as white as snow is her skin, and she's as graceful as the willow yonder. Whin she dances her feet is pat to the music as though they made it; and whin she smiles, ye'd think the day was breakin' over the mountains yonder, af it was the darkest night ye iver saw. Och, but she is a beauty, an' I've seen her grow into it, wid these ould eyes, from a bit baby in long clothes. An' as for goodness, af the angels is only like her, heaven will be a pleasant place."

"She ought to make a good match," said the stranger; "if she's such a piece of perfection as all that."

"She will," said Barney. "Isn't it Squire Bartholmae's only son that gets her; and isn't he as rich and as handsome and as well rared as she, barrin' there's nobody like her in this wide wurld?"

"I'm glad to hear it," said the stranger; "very glad. Here's their healths."

"A drop more to drink it in, honest man," said Barney. "Now I like to mate with one like you that takes an intherest in a body. The minute I set eyes on you I said to myself, there's a man afther me own heart. Good luck to ye."

"And so the squire is better off than your master?" said the stranger.

"Who said that?" cried Barney. "No, no; the squire spends his money faster, but my master can measure purses with him, I'm thinkin'."

"It's but a very great show he makes for it, then," said the stranger. "I don't see a bit of silver, or the like about."

"Would we set it out on the porch for iver thramp to pick up?" cried Barney. "There's silver enough belonging to us, honest man, I can tell you."

"Oh, there is, is there?" said the man doubtfully.

"Sure there is," cried Barney, "a plenty—big pitchers, and turreens, an' tayıots, an' spoons, an' forks, only we kape 'em in the bank most time since the house was broke into a year ago. The villains got nothing, but they were in the house. So we use chaney an' bits iv plated things, an' locks the silver up in the Bank wid the money since thin. But it's to be took out for the wedding; the mistress insists on that, an' we let her have her own way in this house."

"Well, the wedding deserves the silver," said the man. "But you'll keep it here after."

"Not we," said Barney. "It's to be brought down the day before. The masher and I will go with a hamper in the wagon for it, an' thin I'll have the polishin' iv it, an' thin we'll sthore it safe in the big panthry yonder. Look ye, every shelf will be full, solid silver too; things that glitter till they make yer eyes wink. A thray for the taycups even, wid roses round the edge, and the name of the missus in the midst. Och, an' the thing for the pepper an' mustherd—the castor, ye know—an' the cider pitcher, an' all the rest, an' forks an' spoons by the dozen."

The stranger's eyes sparkled. "A burglar would have a good haul," he said.

"And thin he'd be well hauled himself," said Bar-

ney. "There'll be the biggest and maddest baste of a dog here that night that iver ye hard howl. He'd make no more of a thafe than a squirrel does iv a chestnut. An' there's meself, wid a pist' under me pillow, ready to use it ef I hear the dog. The silver'll be safe enough the weddin' night, an' afther that back it goes to the bank. It's part of what we'll lave to our young lady, is the rason we're so careful of it, honest man."

"I see," said the man, "and for the matter of that, where would a burglar enter? It's a safe house enough, well barred and bolted."

"It is that," said Barney; "though once in, barrin' the dog made a noise, you'd not hear a word upstairs nor a step. The walls and partitions are so thick, ye see, and the stairs back iv the entry yonder. It's well to be careful."

"Yes, yes," said the man. "Well I must be going. Good luck to you, and to the young lady. She can't have too much silver to please me."

"Another dhrop to drink that same in," said Barney; "an' good luck to you, honest man, an' spady work. Ye mind the way to the 'Rest'."

"Yes, thank you," said the man.

"An' I wish you were to be at the weddin'," said Barney. "A merry time we'll have—a merry time, an' a good one. Mobbe ye might drop in, and I'd give ye a peep at the bride."

"If I'm about that evening I shall be sure to drop in," said the man, with an odd twinkle in his eyes—those furtive eyes that had never once met Barney's.

"Well, good-bye."

He shouldered his little bundle again, and with a nod turned away from the door, taking the road to the 'Traveller's Rest' until he was out of Barney's sight, and then suddenly turning in quite another direction.

His face, too, took on an expression of suppressed triumph. He laughed once or twice to himself, as though at some very excellent jest, and smacked his lips as though the taste of the cider lingered upon them still.

Meanwhile Barney went back to his table-rubbing. He rubbed with a will, singing once more as he rubbed, until the clock, striking twelve, startled him. "Dinner-time," he said, "and me not half through. Well, well, the mistress won't be home for hours, and I lost me time a pleasant way. There's nothing I like better than a chat wid a friend; and whin I mate an honest man like that I make a friend of him at wunst. An honest, decent man he was," continued Barney, "an' here's hopin' we may mate again, and frequent."

(To be continued.)



[A VISIT FROM MAD JACK.]

THE BIRTH MARK.

CHAPTER XVI.

"For this promise I would willingly be imprisoned half my life, even in a madhouse," exclaimed Leonto, in a joyous tone.

"Come, we are wasting time," growled Harlin, as the count made an imperious gesture.

"You speak well for yourself, ruffian, for you have not many hours to live," said Leonto, fiercely, as the rascal grasped his arm.

"Perhaps not. Move on."

Leonto was led away, and only Count Rocco and his secretary remained with Zaretta.

She did not order the count to withdraw, for he was the father of Leonto; but her beautiful face expressed both dislike and contempt for Gavetto whom she considered as the author of this persecution.

Gavetto, well aware of her belief, cast his eyes upon the carpet, and assumed an air of profound humiliation.

"For what are you honouring my apartment with your presence, gentleness?" demanded Zaretta, with the haughty sarcasm of an insulted princess.

"Will you grant me a short interview, young lady?" asked Count Rocco, in a tone of genuine respect.

"Grant? Sir, you have forced your presence upon me—"

"For which I ask pardon, lady."

Gavetto raised his eyes in wonder, for he heard the haughty Prince of Algarlo asking pardon of an opera-girl!

"I pardon the insult to myself, because you are the father of Leonto, but I cannot pardon the outrage upon him. There is no necessity for further conversation between us," replied Zaretta, pointing to the door.

"One moment, lady. I have been acting under the belief that you were a designing adventuress; that you were enticing my son into a marriage far below his rank. But I have just heard you say to my son that you would no longer refuse to be his wife. Why have you hitherto refused?"

"Because he was noble and wealthy. Because I was poor and nameless."

"And are not so now?"

"If I am, I consider your acts here, sir, as a full cancellation of all my objections of pride and principle. But you have heard all that passed—"

"Yes. That you are, perhaps a countess, the daughter of my brother-in-law, Ferdinand, Duke D'Ossiri, and of his wife Isabella, the sister of my late wife," interrupted the count, with great animation. "Prove to me a shadow of a claim, and I will restore Leonto to your arms."

"That is a rash promise for my lord," thought Gavetto; "but it is like him. The beauty of this stranger has already turned his head, turned him from his pride of rank. Well, she is indeed a miracle of loveliness, and the image of my master's beloved wife. Who is she?"

"I am powerless to furnish proof, at this moment," replied Zaretta, in a tone of grief. "She upon whom I depended, and who but this morning told me of my origin, is doubtless in the hands of that doctor to whose fiendish hands you have confided your only son—"

"Tell me all that has passed this day," interrupted the count, whose appearance was that of a man powerfully interested.

"Tell all, without reservation, and I will be your friend."

"Gavetto," he whispered to the secretary; "I may be wrong, but as I live I believe this girl to be my lost daughter, the child of my beloved wife."

"But the strong proof that the villain Pedro Diaz drowned the infant princess immediately after he had stolen her, my lord," replied Gavetto. "For years your grace has believed the princess dead—"

"True, Gavetto, but do you not see my wife in every feature of this beautiful girl? In every gesture? In her voice? Great Heaven, Gavetto, is it possible that I have barely prevented Leonto from marrying his sister!"

"Be not too fast in your belief, my lord," urged the cautious secretary. "Do not commit yourself. It is true that this lady is the image of the late Princess Algarlo, but is she not also the image of the sister of my late lady?"

"I believe this girl to be my child; my heart tells me this. Let me question her. Mark her replies, Gavetto. Decide for me."

"Of what avail will my calm judgment be against my lord's hot and hasty impulses?" thought the secretary. "Things are taking a strange change. We came into this room to scorn the opera-girl, and now we are eager to prove her our daughter, the princess. Bah! We are all simpletons."

With this Gavetto took a pinch of snuff and prepared to listen.

Zaretta related all that she remembered of Rosa Baetta's confession, and of her visit to the office of James Raymond. The count and his secretary listened attentively, occasionally asked questions—that is the count questioned while Gavetto reflected.

"Well, Gavetto," demanded the count, when Zaretta had told all. "What think you? Is Zaretta the child of the duke, or is she my daughter?"

"Your daughter?" exclaimed Zaretta. "Great Heaven! is there a shade of suspicion that I may be the sister of Leonto? Ah, this is a plot to separate me for ever from Leonto!"

"You see," remarked the count to Gavetto, "I was right in restraining Leonto. He, too, would call us conspirators!"

"On your soul, Count Rocco," said the unhappy Zaretta, "is there any reason, slight or grave, to believe that I am the sister of Leonto?"

"Tell her, Gavetto; I cannot. My heart beats too fast," replied the count.

Zaretta bent forward eagerly, as the grave-faced secretary spoke in obedience to his master. She saw that no feigned emotion was convulsing his features and making tremulous the powerful frame of Count Rocco. Was it about to be proved that Leonto, whom she loved passionately, and who loved her madly, was her brother?

Her charming face was as white and as motionless as that of a marble statue. Her heart seemed to stand still. Her attention was almost breathless.

"Lady," said Gavetto, in his calm, grave voice; "some eighteen years ago my lord, Count Rocco, the Prince of Algarlo, met with a terrible affliction. He had incurred the deadly hatred of a notorious brigand of Italy, one Pedro Diaz."

"This wretch, taking advantage of the temporary absence of count and countess from their palace, near Naples, stole, or rather took by force, their infant daughter."

"The deed was supposed to have been done for the purpose of extorting a heavy ransom, and great rewards were offered for the restoration of the child. All efforts to capture Pedro Diaz were futile, though an immense price was set upon his head."

"My lady, the mother of the stolen infant, soon sank into a premature grave, unable to endure her loss."

Here the count groaned aloud, for the words of the secretary recalled the bitterness of his sorrows as keenly as if but of yesterday.

"My lord," continued Gavetto, "did not despair of regaining his child until he received a letter from the infamous Portuguese to this effect—"

"Ah!" exclaimed the count, in a voice deep with sadness and rage combined, and interrupting his slow-speaking secretary, "the words of that letter are ever upon my brain—'Prince, the brigand greets you highness! He seized the child of his enemy—not for ransom, but for revenge. All the gold in the world cannot restore the dead to life! Search in the lake near your palace, and you will find the vengeance of Pedro Diaz!'"

The features of Count Rocco became terrific in their expression, as he added:

"I searched the lake, and found the mouldering remains of an infant clad in the garments of my child. Then I resigned all hope."

"My lord," continued Gavetto, "resigned all hope, for, though decay had destroyed the features of the child found in the lake, the colour of the hair, the sex, and the garments, declared it to have been the infant princess. Above all evidence was the well-known vindictiveness of the cruel Portuguese."

"It was not long after this loss that we heard that the Duke D'Ossiri had also lost his infant and only child, and time developed the fact that the infamous Countess Inez de Parma was the criminal, aided by Rosa Baetta."

"We have heard your account of yourself, and the question is, are you the daughter of the duke, or of his brother-in-law, the prince. Are you the Countess Perdita, or the Countess Beatrice?"

"No. Am I the sister of Leonto?" exclaimed Zaretta. "That is the question which preys upon my heart. To be a queen or an empress I would not lose the right to become his wife!"

Gavetto continued coldly—if he felt any sympathy his grave features did not reveal it:

"Pedro Diaz is a villain capable of any devilishness. He stole the child of the prince for revenge. He stole the child of the duke from Inez de Parma, that he might murder the child of the prince, which child, according to Rosa Baetta, he substituted for the child of the duke. If what Rosa Baetta says be true you are not the child of the prince, but of the duke—"

"And therefore not the sister of Leonto," joyfully exclaimed Zaretta.

"She would rather be Leonto's wife than be the daughter of an emperor. Well, so my wife loved me," sighed the count.

"If," resumed Gavetto, "Rosa Baetta does not speak falsely, the daughter of the prince was brought to England by the Countess de Parma; but," added the cautious secretary, raising his lean hand to give emphasis to his words, "who shall not say that Rosa Baetta was not deceived by Pedro Diaz? Rosa Baetta received, she says, a child from Pedro Diaz, which she substituted for the infant princess. Pedro Diaz may not have given her the infant princess in exchange. He may have given her a beggar's child in order to gain possession of the child of the prince. He hated both the prince and the duke. He had the child of the duke in his power until Rosa Baetta returned from France after having seen the Countess de Parma depart for England. It is not probable that he stole these infants merely for revenge. He looked far ahead to the time when both prince and duke would forget their loss, when time should have blunted their thirst for vengeance upon him, when he could extort immense sums of money for the restoration of the children. I never believed that the body found in the lake was that of the stolen princess. It was too old—"

"I remember that you said so at the time," remarked the count.

"Again, Rosa Baetta may have lied," said Gavetto. "There may have been an exchange of infants. Rosa Baetta was, by her own confession, a very evil woman. But in admitting that there was such an exchange, it is not probable that Pedro Diaz gave up to Inez de Parma the infant princess. Rosa Baetta says that he had stolen the infant he substituted to win a larger sum of money. Is it not probable that Rosa Baetta, having quarrelled with Pedro, fled with the infant princess to make a bargain for herself, and that her courage failed her, and meeting with James Raymond she conceived the plan of palming Zaretta upon the duke as his daughter?"

"All this reasoning is useless without proofs," said the count, as we will continue to call him. "My heart tells me that Zaretta is my daughter—"

"Mine does not tell me that you are my father," interrupted Zaretta, respectfully. "I do not believe Rosa Baetta would lie to me."

"Your features, voice, and manners are wonderfully like those of my late lady," said Gavetto. "You are a stolen child by Rosa Baetta's confession, her paramour Pedro Diaz stole the child of the prince. There is not a feature of the duke in your face, you are more Italian than Spanish—"

"I am not the sister of Leonto," cried Zaretta.

"Heaven could not have permitted us to love as we love, were we brother and sister."

Gavetto shrugged his shoulders at this remark, but the count said:

"We will immediately confront Rosa Baetta. She is at the private madhouse of Dr. Harlin."

"I am sure that he knows where she is," replied Zaretta.

"We will go there at once, then. We will force him to tell us why he acted as clerk to James Raymond, and why he has confined Rosa Baetta. It is very late, but that does not matter. Will you accompany us, lady?"

"To be shut up as a mad woman?" demanded Zaretta. "No, sir. My heart tells me that you are not my father. It tells me to beware of the man who can commit his son to a madhouse for a mere disobedience of parental tyranny."

"She may be your daughter, my lord," whispered the secretary; "but she will never love you unless—"

"Unless what?"

"Unless it is proved that she is not your daughter, and becomes the wife of Lord Leonto."

"Come, Gavetto, we will seek Dr. Harlin and Rosa Baetta," said Count Rocco, leaving the room.

"And I will go to the house of James Raymond," remarked Zaretta, when alone. "He, they say, is dead or dying, but I have heard that his son, Alfred Raymond, is an honourable man. If James Raymond has been assassinated, no doubt Pedro Diaz did the deed. In the son I may find a friend."

A few minutes later two carriages rolled away from the hotel.

One went towards the residence of Dr. Harlin; the other in an opposite direction, towards the house of James Raymond.

CHAPTER XVII.

ROSA BAETTA soon recovered her senses, for exhaustion and emotion, not drugs, had caused her to swoon. Her invalid system was habituated to opiates; the liquid which she had drunk scarcely affected her.

On regaining consciousness she found herself in a small room, lighted by a single candle which the attendant had forgotten to remove. She perceived that the windows were small, very far from the floor, and strongly barred with iron bars.

"I am a prisoner," she thought, as she looked about her. "I have been betrayed. By whom, and why?"

She arose from the coarse bed upon which she had been placed and tried the door.

"Locked! Then I am really a prisoner. But why?"

She began to reflect, and it was not long before she remembered that James Raymond had spoken to Zaretta of another who claimed to be the lost daughter of the Duke D'Ossiri.

"It is all very plain to me now," thought Rosa. "James Raymond has played the villain. He has been employed by that other claimant. I was in his way. He imprisons me while he uses the proofs of my story to establish his own. Poor Zaretta! You are powerless without me."

She became nervous with the fierce energy of despair, and examined the prison. Escape seemed impossible. The ceiling was lofty, the windows but two in number, small, barred and far above her reach.

"I cannot escape," sighed Rosa, as she paused in the middle of the room. "But certainly Zaretta will rescue me to-morrow. She loves me, and she is brave and resolute. Patience! When I did evil nothing seemed to oppose me. When I desire to do good all appears to rise against me. Perhaps I am doomed to be one of the eternally evil. My repentance has begun too late. Ah, me!"

She placed the candle upon the floor and sank upon her knees in prayer.

She had not been long in this position when something fell lightly upon her bowed head. Startled she looked around. A small piece of plastering from the ceiling fell before her. She looked up and saw a finger, nothing more, piercing the ceiling. Soon a large mass of the plastering fell, and a great, giant hand was visible, tearing at the laths and plastering. "Someone is breaking in from above," thought Rosa Baetta, rising to her feet and retiring towards the wall, yet keeping her eyes fixed upon that great and mysterious hand.

The hand paused for a moment as if its owner was listening, then again went to work. It was not long before another hand, the mate of the other, was thrust into the opening, which soon became quite large, so large that a shaggy, terrible-looking face and head could be seen.

It was the head and face of a man, for Rosa saw the thick, heavy beard around the lips and chin. The

intruder thrust his horrible head through the aperture and fixed his glaring eyes upon Rosa Baetta's.

As if fascinated the trembling woman could not remove her gaze from his.

"Ha! You are there to stop me from escaping!" said the man in a hoarse voice which trembled with rage.

"No! I am a prisoner!" cried Rosa. "Escape if you can—"

"Ah, then you do not know me? I am Mad Jack."

"Who is Mad Jack?"

"Mad Jack was a gentleman once," replied the man, quickly, grimacing and rolling his eyes horribly. "He lived so long that his son thought he never would die, and give him a chance to play duck and drake with his money. So Mad Jack—that's me—was shut up in this house. Do you know?" added Mad Jack, in a deep growl totally different from the rapid tone he had used.

"He is really mad," thought Rosa Baetta.

"Yes," continued Mad Jack; "I want to get out and walk the earth. If ever I can get out and meet Harlin, do you know what I will do to him with this?"

The "this" was his great hand, gaunt and sinewy, around which the tough muscles were knotted like cords, which he thrust far through the aperture in the ceiling and held up as an object of admiration. "I'll tear out his bones one by one."

"What kind of a house is this?" asked Rosa, trembling even at that distance as the madman ground his teeth and rolled his eyes.

"It is a madhouse."

"Oh, and am I an inmate of a madhouse?" cried Rosa.

"Ain't you mad?"

"No. I am not."

"Whoo! that's what I told Harlin, and I was right, my duck," said Mad Jack. "When they brought me here I was not mad. But I am mad now. Harlin made me mad with whips, sticks, chains, hunger, cold, thirst, and fire."

"With fire?"

"Yes. I have been roasted and toasted many a time. Do you want to get out?"

"Yes. Can you help me?"

"Wait and see. They always keep me chained, but I'm loose now. Wait."

Mad Jack instantly resumed his labour to enlarge the aperture. He worked rapidly and less cautiously than before, for he knew the room below was occupied by a fellow-prisoner.

"What does he intend to do?" thought Rosa, as she watched him. "Can he intend to leap to this floor? Perhaps his madness may lead him to attack me. Heaven help me! I have seen the day when I dreaded no man, sane or insane, but I am weak and cowardly now."

When Mad Jack had widened the aperture to his satisfaction, he cried out in a deep whisper:

"I am coming down."

"But you cannot escape from this room," said Rosa. "And if you come down, how will you return?"

"I never thought of it before," said Mad Jack, staring at her fixedly. "But it seems you are a woman. Not an ugly woman like that one which throws my mouldy bread at my head and squalls: 'Eat, you dog!' No, you are really handsome—a little thing, but beautiful eyes."

"Oh, heaven," thought Rosa; "this madman is making love to me. Horrible! He kisses his hand to me."

"It does my eyes good to look at a pretty woman," said Mad Jack, yet using that deep, hoarse whisper of caution. "You are not so young as you would be if you were only eighteen, but then I am not a chicken, you know. But you are really the handsomest woman that Mad Jack has seen for three thousand years. Will you accept my hand and fortune? My hand is rather large and my fortune decidedly small, at present, but if I was out you know, and had my rights again, I'd be a prince."

"You are losing time," cried Rosa. "You said you intended to escape."

"Oh, I forgot that," replied Mad Jack. "Will you marry me?"

"If you will help me to escape, Mad Jack, I will never marry anyone but you," said Rosa.

"Thank you. It is a contract. I am your slave. Wait."

He retired from the aperture, but soon returned with a long chain, which he lowered from the ceiling until it touched the floor. The other end he had fastened, or it was already fastened, to a bolt in the floor of his own prison.

Rosa shuddered as she saw the madman descending this chain, but she never let her steady eyes wander from his.

He reached the floor of her room and stood erect. He was undoubtedly an old man, fully sixty, yet his

frame was powerful, tall and active. His hair was shaggy, white, and apparently unshorn for many years, falling in heavy, scattering masses over his neck and shoulders.

His garb was a close-fitting suit of flannel rage, and he was barefooted. The scars upon his ankles proved that he had long worn irons, and his waist was encircled by a strong iron belt. His wrists, too, were deeply scarred from long wearing of manacles.

Rosa Baetta gazed into the fierce, wild eyes of this dangerous being with the courage of despair.

"You are my queen," said he.

"Then obey me in everything."

"But you forget that I am your prince," he replied, with a harsh laugh, and swinging upon the chain.

At that instant the chain broke near the ring-bolt in the floor of the prison above, and fell into a coil around his neck.

Instant and childish terror overwhelmed the madman. He stared for an instant at the ceiling, and then running into the corner, crouched trembling to the floor.

"I did it," said Rosa, with great presence of mind, and shaking her finger at him. "If I say so, the chain will turn into a snake and strangle you."

"Let me take it off," pleaded Mad Jack in the humble tone of a whipped child. "It has been fastened to my belt for ten thousand years. They gave me plenty of chain for exercise."

"Who?"

"Harlin and the others," replied Mad Jack. "Harlin is my name, too; Mad Jack Harlin, and he's my son."

"He? Who?"

"The devil that keeps me here—the devil that made me mad—the devil that wouldn't wait for me to die, but said his father was mad and chained him—yes, Dr. John Harlin is Mad Jack's son. Whoo!" he added, with a growling laugh, "Mad Jack is the father of Harlin. Harlin found out that his father intended to marry and give all property to his wife, so he clapped his father into this madhouse, and stopped the marriage. Do you know, I could forgive him for all my beatings and all that, but I can't forget him for stopping the marriage."

"Silence! Someone is at the door," whispered Rosa, as her quick ears heard steps in the hall.

She trembled as she heard the steps pause at the door of her room. The key was turned in the lock, the door opened barely wide enough to admit the passage of one person, and someone was pushed into the room.

The door was closed instantly and looked on the outside, and then a voice said through the keyhole: "I hope you will find your room pleasant."

No more was said, and Rosa Baetta gazed at the person who had been thus suddenly forced into her prison.

"Rosa Baetta," exclaimed this person, whose arms were bound.

"Is it possible!" cried Rosa. "Signor Leonto!"

"Yes, I am Zaretta's lover, mother Rosa," began the young man, but at that instant the door was again unlocked and opened partially.

"Come out, sir," said Harlin, for it was he. "I forgot that this room is occupied."

Harlin did not look in, but held the door guardedly open, as if he feared that Rosa Baetta might attempt to escape by a sudden dash, if she had recovered from his drugs. From his position he could not see the madman crouching in the corner, nor Rosa Baetta who was near her bed.

Leonto exchanged glances with her and left the room. The door was closed, locked, and Harlin bade Leonto follow him.

It would have been folly to refuse to obey, for Leonto was surrounded by the stout fellows who had seized him at the hotel. He knew also that it would be folly for him to appeal to them, as they were mere unscrupulous hirelings, and Harlin was ready to use the gag.

"We are somewhat crowded at present," said Harlin, as Leonto followed him up a pair of stairs, "as our house is a popular resort—much patronised. I assure you—by the nobility and fashionable, ah, I have not a room to spare. I will have to place him—where, Roger?"

"What says your honour to the room of Mad Jack?" replied one of his servants. "It is large, and if the gentle man isn't nervous he can stay in there until we fix up the little room on the gallery."

"A capital idea," said Harlin, "but that gallery room is not secure. Still, it will do until to-morrow. How is that old woman who was sick?"

"She'll die before morning, sir."

"That's also capital. Her daughter refuses to pay board for her any longer, so it is excellent for all parties that the old woman should die. Let's see, she is in No. 5. Well, see the gallery room made ready

for our young friend for to-night, and if the old woman dies he can have her room to-morrow. While you are getting ready I will leave him in Mad Jack's room, as I have important business with one of my female patients."

The servants retired to obey his orders, and Harlin followed by Leonto, soon halted before the now vacant room of Mad Jack.

"The gentleman in this room," he said, "is not exactly mad, nor yet sane, but he is yet harmless. He is chained, however, as he is always trying to escape and annoy his relatives—his relatives are very careful of him."

Leonto scarcely heard what the medical villain said, so indignant were his thoughts, and as Dr. Harlin was in a hurry to converse with Rosa Baetta, no more was said until the doctor unlocked and opened the door.

A puff of wind extinguished the candle he held, so that all was instant and intense darkness.

Fearful that Leonto might attempt to escape, Harlin pushed the young man into Mad Jack's prison and locked the door.

"Curse the candle!" growled Harlin. "He might have escaped. Well, he is safe enough now, and I have cleared twenty-five hundred by the job, with as much more to-morrow. Safe job, too, for his father will not, for his own sake, permit me to be disturbed by his son."

He bent his ear to listen, but hearing nothing moved away, muttering:

"That delightful old Mad Jack, who claims me for his son, must be asleep or in a fit of sulks. But before I call on Rosa Baetta, I'll see what my rascals are doing."

Leonto had almost fallen, so sudden and forcible had been the push of the doctor. Yet the violence did him good service, for in his efforts to keep his footing he sprang the cords which bound his arms, so that by fierce exertion he soon found them free.

The room was in total darkness, except where the light from Rosa's room below shone through the aperture. Leonto did not hesitate to grope his way to this aperture.

He found that the strong, oaken floor of the prison had been torn up by an effort, or by long continued efforts of prodigious strength, and the ceiling beneath it broken through.

He gazed down into the room below, and was surprised to see Rosa Baetta.

(To be continued.)

FALSENESS IN TRADE.

So that it seems to be, never mind what it is. Such is the maxim of thousands in this God-fearing country and wonderfully intellectual age. So that a house will just stand, a printed cotton just wash, or a soldier's coat hold together till it is appropriated; so that the inferior stuff at the end of a piece of cloth cannot be discovered till it is opened, and the untempered worthlessness of the axes and picks will not be known till the bales are broken in the backwood by eager workers dependent on sound tools, it is all right: trade has been done, profit has been made. Never mind the loss, the disappointment, the sorrow inflicted on others: profit has been made.

The falseness and sham, the want of truth on the part of workmen in matters connected with their trade, are little less than appalling. You can be certain of nothing. You may buy pens that will not write, pencils with which you cannot mark, milk innocent of the cow, beer that is poisonous, locks that will not last a week, manure that has no pretence to a fertilising quality, and seeds that could not grow in it even if it had. These last are amongst the worst kinds of deceptions—deceptions that cannot be discovered till it is too late to supply a remedy, and the user's hopes for the year are blasted.

Nearly the last Act of the past session of Parliament was one to prevent the adulteration of seeds, declaring that the practice of adulterating seeds, in fraud of Her Majesty's subjects and to the great detriment of agriculture, required to be repressed by more effectual laws than those in force. To "kill seeds" means to destroy by artificial means the vitality or germinating power; and to "dye seeds" is to give to seeds by colouring the appearance of seeds of another kind. The penalty is *£l.* for the first offence, and *50*l.** afterwards, with publication of the offender's name at his expense in the newspapers. We would have had the punishment heavier. For such scoundrels we have no consideration, no mercy; nor can we see any valid reason why the Act should not have come into operation at once, instead of being postponed, as we believe it is, till the beginning of next year. Surely it is not to enable these honest traders, disappointers of men's hopes, to get rid of adulterated stocks on hand?

The tendency of the world to listen to specious promises, to be beguiled by apparent cheapness, to

"Give to dust that is a little gilt,
More laud than gilt o'er dusted,"

encourages the vice to which we are pointing, but does not in the least excuse it.

We remember hearing of contractors, during one of the recent wars, who sent out to our soldiers boots so made and of such materials that they became saturated with the first shower, and endured no time. The commonest feelings of humanity, apart from thought of gratitude, prompt indignation, and should have prevented such an infamous proceeding. The indignation it excites within us has no bounds. We say with Emilia, and with our whole heart:

"O, Heaven! that such companions thou'dst unfold,
And put in every honest hand a whip
To lash the rascals naked through the world."

Even this baseness is paralleled, if it be not exceeded, by those who manufacture life-buoys of materials incapable of floating. Hard as it may be to believe, there is good evidence to prove that many of the life-buoys sold at seamen's shop-shops, instead of being stuffed with solid cork-wood, as they should be, are filled with rushes, straw, or cocoa-fibre, which being tied up in canvass will float for a little time, but are gradually saturated, and sink—destroying what they should have saved. We have talked of whipping, but with the manufacturers of these painted lies, with these murderers for money, we would adopt a shorter course—we would unhesitatingly hang them.

A CHINAMAN TAKING NOTES.

The mandarin in Burlingame's troupe, who writes up the manners and customs of the various countries for the Chinese archives, remarks: "We have dined at their tables, where the stomach is expected to receive with pleasure some thirty different objects of food, and, perhaps ten different liquids. The French and other foreigners eat until they feel very uncomfortable, and require much medicine drugs, as may be seen by the many chemist's shops of this city. They have the same capacity as our pigs—had you been here the other night, and observed how these people rudely scrambled for the food at the supper-table when we gave our *fête*! They put their hands violently on the dishes, and disputed with each other most roughly."

In telling about Burlingame's ball he writes: "O! if you had seen the women at our ball!" They come half undressed; that is to say, the upper part of the body was wholly exposed, but they are jealous of showing their feet, and seem to desire to hide the floor also, as each woman drags about with her a long robe, on which it is not etiquette to place your shoe. Their eyes are painted round (not all of them) and they use coloring for the lips and a pearl powder for various designs; then the women put it on their heads with flowers; and yet they are not a dirty people. The high-caste women are allowed every license. At our *fête* they were clasped round the waist by men they knew not, and danced with painful vigour, for it was hot."

VELOCIPEDES IN BERLIN.—An enterprising individual in Berlin has submitted the following plan to the authorities: He proposes to board over all the gutters on each side of the streets, and the roadway, three or four feet wide, is to be the future velocipede high road of the city. A thousand tricycles are to be placed on it, each with a practised driver dressed in a neat uniform, who will undertake to conduct one person, with letters, parcels, &c., along the road. As velocipedes always drive straight, room to turn is not required, and when the road is free it will serve as a footpath. A small charge for passengers, parcels, and letters will, it is estimated, give a fair return for the cost of construction. He argues that, besides the general convenience of his plan, it will be a great advantage to Berlin to bridge over the gutters, so they are at present very unsightly, and are liable to be frozen over in winter. Moreover, the establishment of footpaths will facilitate the better regulation of the street traffic, and effect a great saving in the expense now incurred by cleaning the streets. The tricycles are to have a little canopy in winter, an umbrella being a sufficient protection in the summer. The projector calculates that a speed may be attained equal to that of an ordinary carriage at least, and guarantees all possible convenience and safety in the transit.

A SUBSTITUTE FOR GRASS ON LAWNS.—In cases where the grasses cannot maintain their ground there are many useful substitutes available. Three years since we were called upon to advise on the turfing of some hot sandy banks, where grass had been fairly tried and had fairly failed again and again. We advised the adoption of common wild thyme, common yarrow, and common camomile for turfing these

banks. They have been so treated, and the result is all that could be desired—a peculiarly dense and beautiful turf. There remains for good soils and skillful hands the once and only for a moment famous *Spergula pilifera*. *Spergula* turf is unquestionably the richest and most perfect turf possible, provided only it is perfect. The reason its fame was ephemeral is just this—that to do complete justice to it is a task requiring more patience and perseverance than in these days of hurry and precocity can be afforded it. The task of keeping newly-planted *Spergula* clear of weeds is tremendous; yet if that task be neglected the weeds quickly kill it out, and there is an end of it. If, however, it could always have the care it requires, there would very soon be seen a *Spergula* lawn in every garden in the land; for it is, when well done, so exquisitely beautiful as to render description impossible, and eulogy a waste of words.

COST OF HEATING ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.—The cubic contents of St. Paul's are, in round numbers, 5,000,000ft., the dome itself containing 2,000,000ft., about equal to the whole capacity of Westminster Abbey. It is thoroughly warmed by the use of the well-known Gurney stoves, thirteen of which are placed in the crypt, and have large gratings over them, through which the warm air ascends—while others are provided with downcasts for the cold descending current to be warmed. The cost of the fuel is about 1d. per hour for each stove; the average cost of the whole fuel consumed during the three winter months is not more than 5s. per week.

SUGAR OF NEW SOUTH WALES.—It seems, by returns from the northern rivers of the colony, that the sugar-producing interest is advancing, it being estimated that little short of 3,000 acres have been placed under cane culture. Machinery, imported and colonial-made, is being put up in various localities, and altogether the progress of this industry is becoming marked and important. It may not be inapposite to remark, in connection with this subject, that favourable advices have been received from the Mauritius, of a new process by Dr. Ivory for the manufacture of sugar, in which the monosulphite of lime gives a more grainy, a drier, and purer sugar than formerly obtained, a larger quantity, of better quality, being obtained from the syrup.

ADVICE.

WOULD a man wish to offend his friends?—Let him give them advice. Would a lover know the surest method by which to lose his mistress?—Let him give her advice. In short, if we are desirous of being universally hated, avoided, and despised, the means are always in our power—we have but to advise, and the consequences are infallible. The friendship of two young ladies, though apparently founded on the rock of eternal attachment, terminated in the following manner. One of them said to her friend:

"My dearest girl, I do not think your figure well suited for dancing; and as a sincere friend of yours, I would advise you to refrain from it in future."

The other, naturally affected by such a mark of sincerity, replied:

"I feel very much obliged to you, my dear, for your advice; this proof of your friendship demands some return. I would sincerely recommend you to relinquish your singing, as some of your upper notes resemble the melodious squeaking of the feline race."

The advice of neither was followed—one continued to sing, and the other to dance, and they never met but as enemies.

SCIENCE.

GLUE WHICH WILL UNITE POLISHED STEEL.—The following is a Turkish receipt for a cement used to fasten diamonds and other precious stones to metallic surfaces, and which is said to be capable of strongly uniting surfaces of polished steel, even when exposed to moisture. It is as follows:—Dissolve five or six bits of gum mastic, each the size of a large pea, in as much spirit of wine as will suffice to render it liquid. In another vessel dissolve in brandy as much isinglass, previously softened in water, as will make a two-ounce phial of strong glue, adding two small bits of gum ammoniac, which must be rubbed until dissolved. Then mix the whole with heat. Keep in a phial closely stoppered. When it is to be used set the phial in boiling water.

RAILWAY PROGRESS IN RUSSIA.—The table of Russian railway statistics for 1870 has just issued from the press. The railways already in operation make up an aggregate of 5,400 English miles, all of which, with the exception of the Moscow, Tsarskoe-Celo, Riga-Dubnag, and Warsaw-Vienna lines have been constructed within the last eight years.

The lines to be opened in 1870 are the Kharkov-Tanrog, 350 miles; the St. Petersburg-Viborg, 240 miles; the Moscow-Smolensk, 260 miles; the Riazan-Bologoy, 172 miles; the Lazovo-Sevastopol, 400 miles; and the Ostashkov-Torjokovsk, 21 miles. To be opened in 1871, the Poti-Tiflis, 190 miles; the Kharkov-Kremontselang, 165 miles; the Voronej-Grushevsk, 353 miles; the Liban, 196 miles; the Ivanovo-Kineshausk, 248 miles; and the Skopinsk-Kiajsk, 29 miles. To be opened in 1872, the Baltic-Port and St. Petersburg, 251 miles; the Tambov-Saratov, 225 miles; and the Borioglaisk-Tsaritzin, 232 miles; the whole forming a total of 3,335 miles of railway to be completed and set in operation within the next three years. The programme of the "outer list" contains the lines surveyed during the past year, and now about to be commenced. These reach the enormous aggregate of 10,000 English miles, and run thus: Southern and Western lines—1. From Smolensk to Brest-Litovsk; 2. From Rostov (on the Don) to the central Caucasus; 3. From Livna to Orel. Eastern lines—1. From Tiflis (the chief town of the Caucasus) to Baku, on the Caspian Sea; 2. From Nijai-Novgorod (*via* Kazan) to Ekaterinburg, the frontier town of Siberia; 3. From Morshansk (*via* Penza and Samara-super-Volga) to Orenburg, the frontier town of Tartary. Northern lines—1. From Yaroslavl or Riazan to Volodya; 2. From Viatka (a town about 300 miles to the north-east of Nijai-Novgorod) to Archangelsk.

TELEGRAPHS.—There are only one or two short sections requisite to complete the circuit between Sydney and London; and it is estimated that that portion in which Australia is chiefly concerned, namely from the Gulf of Carpentaria to the Island of Java, a distance of 1,900 miles could be laid for 500,000*l.* Application has been made to the government of Dutch India for a concession to land a cable on the east coast of Java, to connect Australia, under a subsidy or guarantee. It is proposed to ask from the governments of the Australian colonies a guarantee of seven per cent. on a moiety of the cost of construction, and the amount which they would be asked to contribute is set down at 17,500*l.* The proportion payable by New South Wales would simply be 4.375*l.* in the event of the traffic not paying a dividend of seven per cent. over and above the working expenses.

TO RENDER TIMBER INCOMBUSTIBLE.—In the *Nenes Jahrbuch für Pharmacie*, Herr Reinsch states that, having been requested to report to a fire insurance company about the best means of preventing timber bursting into flame, he experimented with various salts, and at last came to the conclusion, as the result of his experiments, that impregnating timber with a concentrated solution of rock-salt is as good, if not better, a preservative against its bursting into flame as water-glass (silicate of soda), while the price of the former salt is, of course, only a mere trifle; moreover, rock-salt thus applied to timber is a preservative against dry rot and noxious insects. The author recommends the use of salt water, that is to say, a solution of rock-salt of moderate strength for the use of fire-engines during a fire as by far more effective than water; but in order that the salt should not injure the working parts of the engines, they will immediately afterwards have to be played with fresh water again.

IVORY.—An improved method of bleaching ivory, especially for use in pianos, has recently been discovered. The ivory, when cut into plates of the proper thickness for keys, is placed in a flat vessel, and a solution of carbonate of soda, in the proportion of ten ounces of soda to two pounds of soft river water to each pound of ivory, is poured over it. This is allowed to remain for 36 or 48 hours, after which the solution is to be poured off, and the ivory washed several times in cold soft water; after this it is to be again immersed in a solution consisting of three-quarters of a pound of sulphate of soda and two pounds of salt water to a pound of the ivory, and allowed to remain 5 or 6 hours. Two ounces of hydrochloric acid, previously diluted with four times its weight of water, are then to be stirred in, and the vessel covered with a tight-fitting cap, and allowed to remain 36 hours. The liquid is then poured off, and the ivory plates well washed and dried in the air. Should the desired degree of whiteness not be obtained by one operation, it can be repeated until successful. As the gases generated during the process are injurious to the lungs, it will be readily understood that the operation should be conducted in the open air, or in a chimney, where the fumes can be carried off.

AN ELECTRICAL EXPERIMENT.—If a common Leyden jar or a sheet of glass be coated upon each side within a short distance of its edge with metal foil, and a battery of high tension be applied, one pole to one side, and the other pole to the opposite side, the two surfaces of the glass acquire the same tension as the battery-poles, which the metal coating quickly

distributes over the area they cover, and as the intervening glass is an exceedingly bad conductor—that is, interposes immense resistance to the passage of the current both over it and through it—these surfaces will retain their respective electrical states even after the battery is withdrawn, until connected together by a better conductor; and when they are so connected, the discharge of this tension passes through the conductor and becomes manifest upon a galvanometer placed in its circuit, the amount of the swing produced upon the needle indicating the amount of the discharge. The amount of charge can be ascertained, says the *Scientific Review*, by inserting the galvanometer in the circuit of one of the battery-poles. The proof that the charge is an effect entirely distinct from the constant flow of the current caused by any leakage in the dielectric is, that as soon as the surface is charged, the galvanometer needle will return to zero, although the battery contact is maintained.

THE EMPEROR OF BRAZIL is expected to visit England in December and January.

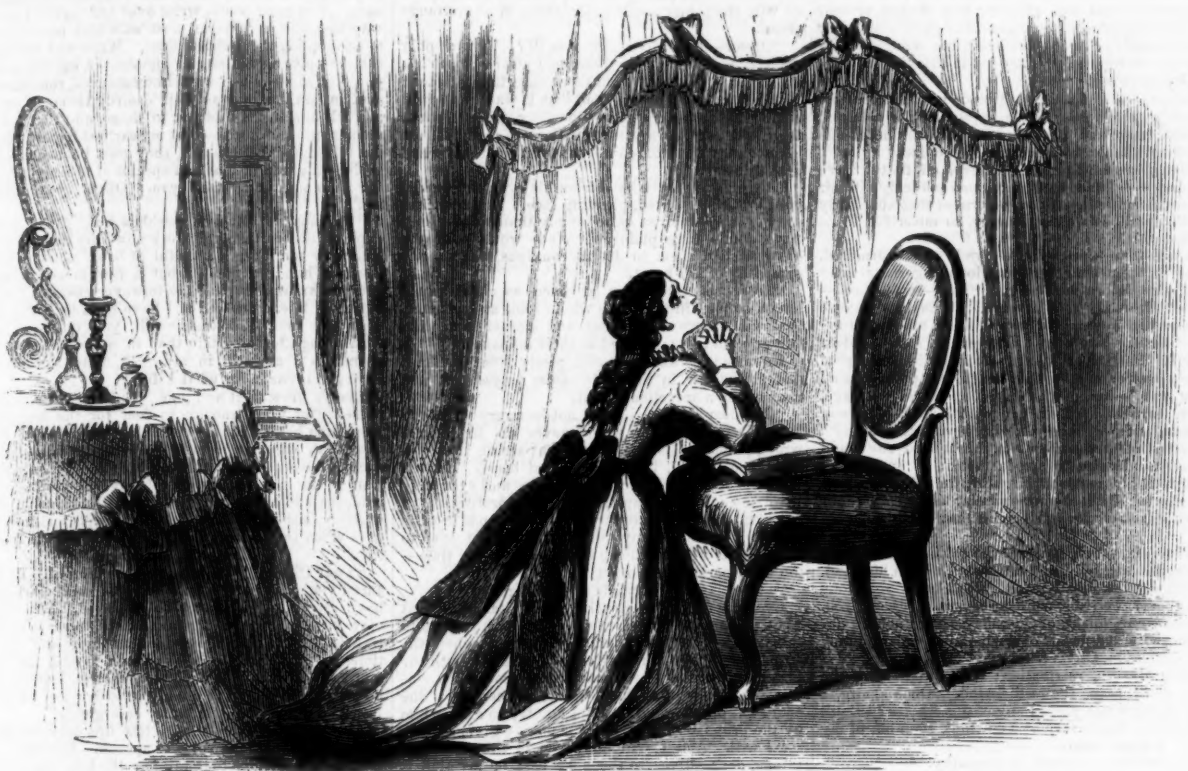
ADULTERATION OF BUTTER.—A merchant of Birmingham, paid a high price (108*s.*) for a parcel of butter, and being desirous of testing its quality, he took 27 oz. from a firkin, and sent it for analysis to Mr. Stoddart, an eminent analytical chemist of Bristol. We give the result of the analysis:—Water, 4.05 oz.; wood, dirt, &c., 6.8 oz.; meal, 2.54 oz.; common salt, 1.60 oz.; mineral matter, clay, &c., 4.3 oz.; lard and butter, 17.70 oz.; colouring matter, 0.

A CONSIDERABLE portion of the ruins of Kenilworth Castle having shown signs of falling, Earl Clarendon, the owner, is now repairing and strengthening the great hall, Leicester's Buildings, and parts of the external walls on either side. His lordship is also restoring some of the doorways, windows, and fireplaces. In the course of the repairs excavations have been made, and underground apartments, cells, and passages revealed, which have been hidden for centuries.

WOOLWICH DOCKYARD was closed on Friday, the 17th ult., after being open for about 300 years. Every care has been taken by the Government to render the change which they have made for the national benefit productive of as little local injury as possible.

SCHLEIDEN, in speaking of the prodigious fecundity of aquarian life, says: "We marvel at the hen which will lay 200 eggs in a year, but the eggs of a fish must be counted by hundreds of thousands. In every mouthful the whale swallows thousands of tiny *Clio borealis*, which forms its chief nourishment. Frequently on the coasts of Greenland the sea is covered for ten to fifteen miles in breadth, and 150 to 200 miles in length, with tiny *Medusa*. A single cubic foot contains 110,592 of these animals, and such a streak of colour must contain at least 1,600 billions of them!"

A MARVELLOUS MODELLER.—Danton the celebrated French caricaturist, has just died at Baden-Baden. His power of modelling from memory was phenomenal. After one long look at his subject he could go to his studio and make a bust perfect in its resemblance. Numbers of anecdotes are told of his feats in this way. One day a young man came into his studio and told him he had a sister mortally ill, and his family wished to have her portrait. They dared not ask her to sit; to do so would have been to awaken her suspicion. In a word, Danton undertook to reproduce her features from memory. The next day the brother informed his sister that he intended to make her a present of a jewel for her next ball. Danton was introduced as the young man from the jeweller's, and while the young lady was looking at the specimens sent the artist made his observations. On going home he produced a bust of striking resemblance. Next year an old man, the father of the brother and sister, came to ask Danton to do the bust of his son, also from memory, for the young man was dead. Danton succeeded as well for the brother as he had for the sister. He was not, however, always so successful. On one occasion a gentleman who could not get his wife to sit asked Danton to take his place on a given day at a given hour, in one of the omnibuses running from the Madeleine to the Bastille, and he would see his wife there, and might observe her attentively. Danton did as directed, executed a splendid bust, sent it to the husband, and received for answer that it was not in the least like his wife, but was the very image of her maid. Danton had made a mistake in the 'bus. He left a splendid fortune, as the result of his art labours, to his widow, besides a legacy of 3,250*l.* to his sister-in-law, Mlle. Moutier, 800*l.* to a niece, 800*l.* to found an annual prize at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, 400*l.* to the Society for the Relief of Poor Artists, and several valuable gifts to his numerous friends.



[THE ONLY CONSOLATION.]

EVELYN'S PLOT.

CHAPTER XXI.

OLIVER tried to smile when he saw her.

"Evelyn," he said, quietly, "I have been going to ask you a question for several days, but I have never had a good opportunity till now."

The blood tided in her face. She could scarcely doubt what the question would be. It must be that which is the most important in woman's life—one that turns either the current for weal or woe—one in which she yields up her own existence, as it were, to another, and is lost in his very life. Such was the question that Evelyn naturally expected to hear, but a glance at Oliver's face at once dispelled the illusion.

There was no lover-like agitation, no tender asking pleading of the eyes, no speaking in the whole noble face of love, hope, and fear.

It wore all the one hard, dry, anxious alarm and gloom that had so often perplexed and distressed her of late.

"Will you come into my room, my little business room, Evelyn. We shall be more undisturbed there."

The girl followed in wondering silence. Something extraordinary was about to happen, or to be revealed.

And when the door was closed behind them, and Oliver placed a chair for her near to his own, and gazed for a moment with an anxious, troubled look on a paper that he drew from his pocket, she could not restrain the shiver that ran through her whole frame.

The first words, however, were not at all alarming, however they might be somewhat contrary to his usual habits of late.

"Evelyn, have you not had tickets sent you for the grand City ball on the 10th?" he observed.

She literally stared at him in amazement. At last she stammered out:

"No—yes! I had really forgotten. I took so little notice of them."

"I wish you to go, dear Evelyn."

"Go, and just now? Oh, Oliver."

He started almost angrily.

"What do you mean, Evelyn—by 'just now?'"

"What do you mean to imply?"

His voice was harsher than Evelyn had ever heard it, when applied to herself. And her own was sad and low, as she replied:

"I did not mean to vex you, dear Oliver; but I

cannot help seeing that you have not been like yourself lately, and that Uncle Mark is worse, and then Cecil being away. No, it is impossible—at least, unless you wish it very much."

"I do wish it, Evelyn—my dear, docile little cousin. In the first place, I cannot but see that you are becoming sad, gloomy, and dull, shut up as you are in this seclusion. And, besides, to tell you the truth, that affair of my accident, and all that belonged to it, made rather an unpleasant noise in the city, and it will be of service for you to appear with me, and of course Mrs. Forbes, at this ball; and also to seem as gay and animated as the Evelyn of the last season, the belle of the *débutantes*."

And he smiled sadly.

"I—oh, Oliver! how can I? But it is wrong of me to talk in that way. Of course, I will do my best, and if you are there I shall not mind it so much."

How sweet such an involuntary homage from one so young and lovely would have sounded in most men's ears.

But Oliver, though he thanked her with grave and gentle kindness, seemed too pre-occupied to be fully aware of all that it implied.

"And Evelyn, I should like you to dress with unusual taste and care. Will you wear your favourite coral set of jewels, and a new dress, as expensive and becoming as you please, and I will give you a cheque for it, as the extravagance is of my creating."

And he smiled faintly.

Evelyn was about to say, that it was unnecessary, but the next moment, she remembered that she had drained her own resources somewhat, in order to help Cecil, and she, half blushing, half laughingly, accepted the offer.

"And the diamonds we gave you, Evelyn. Be sure to wear them," he said. "I know it is not good taste for a young girl to be much dressed, but in this case I have a reason, and you will not much mind what may be the opinion of the City magnates."

He was silent for a few minutes, and Evelyn literally lost voice in surprise at the whole tenor of the conversation.

Then he resumed:

"There will be some acquaintances of mine there, whom I should like you to meet. A Mrs. Wentworth and her niece, a lovely girl about your own age, Evelyn."

This time her ideas assumed a more personal and jealous tone, but she replied with more decision than before:

"Certainly, Oliver, any friends of yours I shall, of course, like to meet with pleasure."

And again there was a pause.

Then Oliver cleared his voice. He seemed to find it difficult to explain what was to come next. And the tone was husky and constrained in which he said:

"Evelyn, I—if I remember aright, I gave you the last year's income, in bank-notes."

She looked up, as if his senses were forsaking him, so sudden was the transition.

"Yes, I think—that is, I am sure you did," she replied quietly.

"Have you got them now?" he asked eagerly.

"Some of them; most of them," she said; "I have had very little occasion to spend them lately, and I have not been paying any of my accounts as it happens."

"So much the better," he said with a sigh of relief; "so much the better. Will you be so good as to fetch them, Evelyn, I will give you a proper equivalent."

She smiled, and hastily left the room. It was some minutes ere she returned.

Oliver paced the room with hurried steps, while she was absent. Nervous, hurried heavy steps that spoke a mind ill at ease.

But, no sooner did her light footfall sound at the door than he sat down in his former chair, as if unwilling that she should know the full extent of the trouble that oppressed him.

She had in her hand the purse that had been so strangely restored to her, and a writing case.

Oliver met her as if eager to take the articles from her.

"Are they all here, Evelyn?" he said, taking the purse from her.

"Yes, I think so; but I have brought the case, in case I should have left one in it by mistake; you can now examine it."

Her cousin took the pretty net purse and turned out the contents rather with the eagerness of a man who is searching for a booty, and wanting to ascertain its full value, than the quiet and well-bred air of a gentleman who wishes to satisfy himself of the exact contents of a purse thus given to him.

His cheeks grew paler and paler, and his hands trembled as he tried to unclasp the spring, and then to draw the flimsy papers from the net purse to which they clung.

"Will you empty it for me, Evelyn," he said, with a half pained look. "Your slender fingers will be more able than mine to extricate these delicate trifles."

The girl was literally taken by surprise. She could not comprehend her cousin's strange manner, nor such avidity in the case of a sum that could but

be a bagatelle in his eyes. Another link in the chain of mysteries that was clinging and closing around her was being thus rivetted, and the girl's heart sank as she found her last dependence, her noble-hearted cousin, so completely failing her in this time of perplexity and need.

But she said nothing; hinted nothing of this. She only quietly obeyed the request of the pale and agitated man, and drawing out the bank notes she laid them silently on the table before him.

"They are all there," I believe, all that I have had since—"and then she stopped suddenly. Oliver was counting them with an eagerness that absolutely shocked her. It was so hungry, so miserlike in its character.

"One—two—three—four—five!" he murmured, counting them over with anxious eagerness more than once before he spoke. "One—two—three—four—five. Only five, Evelyn! What has become of the others? And the largest of all, too—the fifty-pound-note! You do not answer me, Evelyn—dear Evelyn. But I must know! It is not idle curiosity. It is a matter of life and death, my poor cousin! Have you?"—and he hesitated, and fixed his large, grave, earnest eyes on her with a look of strong determination—"Have you parted with it, Evelyn?"

Instead of answering him, for indeed she could scarcely find voice to speak, instead of answering, she opened the portmanteau, and after a little searching, she found three more similar notes, which her cousin seized with a suddenness that really startled her.

"Five, six, seven, Evelyn," he said, counting them over again hurriedly, and crushing them in his hand. "You must have had more! What have you done with them? Tell me, my dear cousin, I beseech you, have no concealment, or you may bring upon all our heads swift and most overwhelming retribution."

"Retribution, Oliver?"

"Yes, Evelyn, retribution; for he that sows the wind, shall reap the whirlwind. Once more, I ask you, have you passed any of these notes? Don't be alarmed, dear Evelyn. You think I am out of my mind. I wish I were."

The girl's lip quivered in sympathy.

How she wished that she had the right to soothe him. How she wished that she were either the sister or the wife, who could have drawn him to her and whispered words of consolation and of hope. But something in his manner awed her. She felt that it was a case beyond ordinary expression of lamentation, and that unless he confided the whole truth to her, all her soft sympathy would be in vain.

"I have not passed any of these notes, Oliver."

"Not in any way. Then where are they?" he said impatiently.

"I have not offered to pass any, since one occasion, about a fortnight since, when I wanted to purchase a trifle at a strange shop, where I was not known, and they declined to take it unless I gave my name and address, and as I happened to have the sum about me I thought it less trouble to pay it, and get the note exchanged near home when I returned. Was I not right, Oliver?"

"God bless you, Evelyn, yes; you know not how right!" he exclaimed with a sigh of relief. "But where are they, if you have not passed them, and if you have not them in this case, where are they?"

She was silent.

"Evelyn, I must know. Where is the fifty pound note, and the two missing twenties?"

She was again silent.

Then she said faintly:

"Oliver, if it is indeed of such great importance I will tell you. Though it is almost a violation of confidence to do so. Some two or three weeks since, I received a mysterious note from a person whom I believed to be Cecil, and still in truth I feel confident that it was my poor brother, and in my reply, through an appointed channel, I enclosed a fifty pound note, and the two missing twenties."

A hasty muttered groan escaped from Oliver's ashy lips as he sprang up, and running his eyes over the notes once more, gave them a sudden twist, crushed them together, and flung them into the grate. Then before Evelyn could speak or interfere, he had struck a light, held it to the bundle of the flimsy papers, and in another second they were blazing with a sudden illumination that dazzled the whole room.

Evelyn uttered an exclamation of terror as she started up and tried to save them, for she really thought her cousin had gone mad on the spot. But it was too late.

A sudden flash, and then all was dark. The blazing tinder had gone up the chimney, and was lost to them and to the world for ever. For a few moments all was silence.

Oliver had thrown himself in the chair, and covered his face with his hands.

Evelyn gazed horrified and bewildered at him for some moments. Then she knelt down by her cousin's

chair, and taking his cold hand in hers, strove to win from him some explanation of the strange scene.

"Oliver—dear Oliver, are you ill? Tell me only what it is. What has distressed you? What has made you so annoyed about those unfortunate notes? You are not angry, are you, that I wanted to send some relief to poor Cecil—especially, when his fate is in such terrible mystery? Forgive me if I have done wrong, but I dared not tell even you that he had sent to me."

Oliver removed the hand from his eyes, and looked gently at the uplifted, pleading face. The beautiful gray eyes spoke even more plainly than words could have done—more plainly than she would willingly have wished them to do, the anxious, affectionate sympathy of her heart.

There was something at once so childlike, so sweet, so pure in the girl's whole look and manner, that a far more indifferent and sterner man than Oliver would have yielded to their influence.

He raised the kneeling girl gently from the floor, and placed her in the little *chaise longue* that was near his own accustomed seat.

"No, dear Evelyn, I could not be angry with you in any case; for you would never do intentional wrong; and in this case it was but acting from the dictates of a kind, loving, and good heart. Heaven bless you, dear girl, for your patience and sympathy with my apparent unreasonable waywardness! I have but one more favour to ask. Do not breathe one word of this to any living creature, not even to Arthur. It will be known in time, in proper time—too soon, perhaps, too soon!"

And he clasped his hands in mute agony.

Evelyn gazed panic-struck on his agitation. What could she say? What could avert such a certain catastrophe? What could be hoped for when the strong and brave Oliver was so overcome with the terror and horror of the fear, that he could not control the agony that shook him to the centre? She could but promise. She could but try to soothe him by the promise earnestly and sincerely given.

"I will. And I will obey you in this and in all things, dear Oliver, to the very best of my ability. I know you would never wish me to do wrong."

"No," he said, bitterly; "no. Far be from me to pollute your pure nature, or hurt your conscience with one wrong act, dear Evelyn. But in this case it would but bring ruin on many—perhaps on the innocent, to breathe one word of this; and it could not do good—not to any human being."

"It is enough, Oliver; you have my promise, and it shall be fulfilled."

There was silence for a moment or two.

"Where was Cecil when he wrote?" he asked suddenly.

"I cannot tell."

"But, surely, you had some means of communication with him, or how could you have sent the notes?" he said, his brow lowering.

"If you insist on it, Oliver," she began.

"No, I do not insist," he said. "I do not insist; but can you tell me whether he ever received the notes in question?"

"I cannot. I have never heard from him since."

"Have you any sure mode of communication with him now?"

"None whatever."

"Is he in England or abroad?"

"To the best of my belief, abroad."

"And you cannot now tell where a letter might reach him?"

"Only through the channel which I used before, and which I cannot tell is now a safe or a direct one; but still, I could try it if you wished."

"Stay one instant. There is yet one other question I would ask, but you may not be able to answer it."

"I can but try."

"Well, then, if your letter with these notes did not reach him, would it have any address that would enable you to rescue it? Is it directed to any post-office, either in our own country or abroad, or would it be returned to you if it did not find its destination?"

The girl shook her head sadly.

"I fear not; indeed, I am sure not, Oliver. By his own wish my letter had no address in it and only the initials of my name, so that it would be impossible for it to be returned. And as to the direction to any post-office, that was, unluckily not the case, for it was enclosed under cover to another address, and even that would, he said, be transmitted to him if it should fail to reach him at the place sent to."

The cousin groaned.

"Then, there is no hope—none."

After a brief pause he said, suddenly:

"Evelyn, it will be better, under any circumstances, for you to try what can be done. We must not leave one stone unturned to avert a great calamity which,

as you say, is almost more than I can bear to anticipate. You must write, write over and again, in any way that you may deem most safe and most likely to accomplish the desired effect. Write and tell him that he must not, in any circumstances, use the notes you sent him—not in any circumstances, remember; and, in fact, he may as well destroy them at once, and tell him that I told you to do so, and that I will recompense him for them at my earliest opportunity; but tell him, at all hazards, they must be destroyed."

Evelyn gazed at him in a species of dreamy terror. "I do not understand you. Oliver, you terrify me."

"Perhaps not, Evelyn, perhaps not. But I can't explain this wretched mystery now, my dear cousin. You saw me burn a handful of bank notes, worth nearly a hundred pounds, but a few moments ago, and you know enough of me, however changed I may appear of late, enfeebled as I have been by bodily illness and mental distress—still, you do know me well enough to be certain that in spite of these appearances I am still in my right mind, and that I have good reason for what I did."

Evelyn grew faint and pale. But she yet retained presence of mind enough to feel for the haggard, worn man before her far more than for herself. She saw that, whether from some secret mental grief, some hidden cause for anxiety, or from frequent prostration, her cousin was completely the victim of a haunting and uncontrollable terror. And Evelyn was scarcely one to think of her own griefs and uneasiness when the distress of a beloved one was in question.

"Dear Oliver," she said, "be comforted. Be assured you can trust in me, that the confidence you have reposed shall never be betrayed. Whatever may be the cause of this fearful distress, whether transient or lasting, depend on me, now and at all times, to prove worthy of the kindness and the care you have ever lavished on me. Oliver, believe me, no sister could be more deserving to be relied on than I will be, in any trial, in every emergency."

He was silent for a time. His lips quivered as if he feared to trust his voice to speech. But when, at last, he did attempt to thank her the tone was softer and more composed than he had hitherto used during the interview.

"I will, indeed, trust you, Evelyn. I have already trusted you with a knowledge, the importance of which time only can prove. But whatever happens, be assured that there is no one in this world who is dearer, who is so dear, or whose happiness I would sacrifice so much to ensure, as yourself."

Evelyn's cheek flushed and her hand trembled, as Oliver quietly impelled her to the door.

"No, no, dear Evelyn," he said. "I have much to do, and I dare not trust myself with anything so weakening as your sympathy. As I told you, Evelyn, my mind is not really gone, whatever it may seem to you, though sometimes my very brain totters at the prospect before me."

Evelyn dared not linger. For her own sake she wished to get away from a scene in which she dared hardly trust her own self-control.

But Oliver was not one to misconstrue any look or word of hers. He had himself too completely yielded to the influence of the emotion he had felt to be suspicious or critical as to hers. But still she longed to be in solitude and safety where she could indulge without prejudice or danger the feelings that were tearing her very heart-strings.

The young man suddenly stopped as they reached the door.

"Stay, Evelyn," he said. "I had forgotten—you will need money. I have robbed you of every shilling, for one reason, and, for another, you will need an additional cheque for your ball-dress."

"The ball, dear Oliver, I cannot go," she said, piteously.

"Cannot? Why not?" he exclaimed, with a vain effort at a smile. "Cannot, because I have burned a few bank-notes before your face, and tell you that your brother must not spend what his generous little sister sent to him. Silly little puss, don't be so easily frightened, Evelyn; all will come right I do not doubt, if we are patient and trustful. I am a fool to have tried you so severely, but I did not like not to give you some reason for my apparent insanity. There I have written a cheque for two hundred pounds that will pay back all I have taken from you. And stay, here is another that you can keep, and use when I give you notice. I might forget it, and it may be useful in time of need."

Evelyn took the cheques with a hesitating grasp. She was more and more puzzled by Oliver's manner, but she had at once the consideration and the delicacy to refrain from any useless questioning.

"Dear Oliver: I will not torment you," she said; "but I want just to beg one favour of you. If there is anything to be feared tell me as soon as it is possible. Do not let it come too suddenly; I can bear

anything rather than this terrible suspense and the sudden blow that may succeed it."

"Poor child—poor child," he murmured. "Yes, Evelyn; rely on me. I will not let you be startled if it is possible to help it; but after all," he said, more cheerily; "after all it may never be needed. And my little cousin will only blame me for a temporary fit of delirium and forgive the pain I caused her unnecessarily."

The girl left the room and hastened to her own apartment; but in what distress, what feverish agony and suspicion.

She closed the door and locked it. But the instant she found herself alone she felt such an overwhelming sense of hopeless, helpless, unbearable wretchedness and alarm that she would have thankfully returned to Oliver's room, even at the price of the alarm and the grief that his words and manners cost her. She would have given worlds to throw herself on some friendly bosom and weep out her grief, and cling to the clasping arms for comfort and support. But it could not be so. She must bear her burthen alone. Alone with heaven. Alone with Him who has promised with words that cannot lie to support and assist those who put their trust in Him, and cast their burden on Him. Alone with the only Being in whom mortals can ever safely confide, the only Being who can love while reading all the excesses and the errors of the human heart.

And she cast herself on her knees and told all her griefs and all her fears, her desires, and her duties, even as the much-tried King of Israel laid his griefs before the Lord, and she strove with all her power of mind and body to rally her energies and to think over the strange interview that had just concluded.

She bathed her eyes in order to cool her brain and help her powers of thought, and then pacing the room for a few moments, with calm, deliberate steps, she gave a long, deep gasp, and then sitting down in her accustomed chair she began to think.

Evelyn was very young, and very inexperienced. But it was so remarkable a case that even to her vague perceptions she could scarcely help suspecting that some serious crime, some fearful dread of exposure, was at the bottom of this mystery. As Oliver had himself said, it was almost an act of insanity to burn such representatives of property unless the property itself was dangerous in its character. And though she could have said with old Lear:

"Not there, not there, for that way madness lies."

She could not altogether shut her eyes to the truth. Something in the existence of the bank notes was dangerous to Oliver, or to some one especially connected with him; and his very anxiety for her to go to the coming ball was an even more alarming symptom of the importance of reputation to him at that juncture.

It was so unlike Oliver; of all men whom she had ever known he was precisely the one to disregard all but realities, and to utterly despise any sort of conventional study of the opinion of others. Yet now he was absolutely going to do violence to inclination, if to nothing else, and to appear at a scene out of their usual sphere, and where few, if any, of their usual friends would be present, and for the novel purpose of silencing reports.

What reports could or ought to damage the character of Oliver Danvers? And if so, what business had he to take any such means of silencing them—what business to attach such importance to the idle gossip of strangers and indifferent persons. It seemed unworthy of Oliver—unworthy and unlike him.

Evelyn drew the conclusion that there was some deeper reason than her cousin had yet confessed to her for his reticence.

"I will try," she thought, "I will try; but, oh, how difficult it will be! How can I put on a bright and smiling face when my very heart is laden and burdened with such a weight? But then, Oliver—dear—dear Oliver! For him I can do all—all! And when he is bearing so much—so very much, how selfish to think for a moment of myself!"

The idea of acting gave her courage. There is nothing so intolerable as inertia and suspense. If only one call on the energies is made—if only one mode is open of alleviating or of removing the evil, then, and not till then, the dead and intolerable load seems removed, and the powers of hoping are restored to some degree of elasticity.

Evelyn began to remember the injunctions of Oliver. She drew her writing-table towards her, and began to write to Cecil. But it was a difficult task to frame her letter so as to be understood by him, and yet to prevent any suspicion being excited should it fall in improper hands.

The chances that it would reach Cecil, were, she feared, so small that she rather worded it as if it were for a stranger, than for his own immediate comprehension.

Again and again she tore it up, disappointed with her own efforts. But then, at last, she felt that the

task must be completed, and she hastily wrote off a few lines which she read over and closed, almost without trusting herself to consider whether they were suitable or not. It ran thus:

"DEAREST BROTHER,—I find that I did wrong in the remittance which I forwarded to you, in compliance with your request. It ought to have been very differently managed, and I beg of you, for my sake, and the sake of all whom you love best on earth, not to use the drafts I sent you, but rather put them in the fire at once, and the instant that you have done so, I will forward you the amount in a different shape. Be assured I would not make so singular a request without the most urgent grounds for doing so, and I feel certain my brother will not refuse my earnest prayer and truthful assurances that it is dictated by most urgent and all powerful motives. Your loving sister, E. K."

This, without address or clue to the writer, she at once directed to the same resting place to which she had sent her former missive.

Now a kind of feverish impulse urged her to try and give some action to her cold, heavy heart—to divert for a brief space her wretched, maddening thoughts.

She could fulfil all Oliver's behests at once. She would go to select the ball dress on which he placed such strange stress, and see the letter she had penned safely placed in the post-office. The idea might at first sight, appear a strange caprice after her recent agony; but it was in some measure connected with it. It was at least carrying out directions that her cousin had deemed of moment, for the averting of the mysterious calamity he feared.

And she felt a species of relief in thus acting. She bathed her eyes to remove the tear-stains, and then rang the bell and ordered the carriage.

Lizzie was somewhat astonished. She had heard the hurried steps, the deep sighs, and it might be, the smothered sobs of her young lady in the adjacent room; and when summoned to Miss River's presence, she certainly expected an order for preparing the young lady for bed, rather than for the carriage. But, of course, she had no alternative but to obey.

"Shall I go with you, Miss Evelyn?"

"Oh, yes. You can help me, perhaps, in choosing a dress for a ball, Lizzie. It will be rather a novelty for you, after the long quiet interval we have had."

And the girl smiled sadly.

"I shall be charmed, Miss Rivers, as you know," said Lizzie, brightening up. "I am sure it will do you good. You have been so dull lately. I don't wonder you have got nervous and moping. I am only so sorry that it is not the season, for you could not help going out then."

Evelyn shuddered.

Her chief comfort was that it was not the season, or the whole mysteries that were going on at the moment would have been patent to and canvassed by all their good-natured friends and acquaintances. But, happily, Lizzie was too much engrossed with the unexpected prospect of change to notice the effect of her words; she had left the room to order the carriage, and had returned to make the necessary preparations for her young lady's outdoor toilette ere Evelyn had noticed her absence.

The drive was but a short one, for the shops where they were to choose the costume and the modiste who was to arrange it were within a very limited distance of each other.

Evelyn's correct taste was seldom at a loss in the choice of an appropriate dress for any occasion, but on this one, indeed, she was more than usually perplexed. For the directions of Oliver were in opposition, not merely to her own present feelings, but to the usual style of her whole toilette.

Her dress, even as the niece of the wealthy Mark Danvers and the recipient of an allowance that might have sufficed an earl's daughter, had been ever distinguished by as much elegant simplicity as was consistent with the circle in which she moved. Her dress had been rather that of a Continental girl, in its extreme freshness and absence of ornament or extraneous splendour. The finest and most exquisite fabrics, the most lovely of bouquets, the most precious of laces, were to be seen in her attire; but not any feathers, or trimmings, or jewels, save in the most sparing and rigid taste. And in the present instance she was actually at fault, when desired to appear in an unusually splendid and costly costume.

At last, she decided on the most exquisite striped, silver gauze that Indian looms could weave, over a delicate white silk, and a corresponding and most exquisite *coiffure* to the trimmings of the dress. The whole was of a cost that would have furnished, at least, three of her ordinary ball dresses; but it had been Oliver's will, and she unquestioningly obeyed his desire.

They returned to the carriage, after Evelyn had herself posted the letter to Cecil, and Lizzie was at little pains to hide her exultation.

"It will be a little like old times, Miss Evelyn, and I am so glad, because you see that some of the servants talk, Miss Evelyn, and wonder what is come to the household. And what I was more vexed at than anything was that the new butler, who came from some city place or other—I mean from some gentleman in the city, Miss Evelyn—looked very queer at supper, last night, and alluded to the chance of our all being in our places this day twelvemonth; and all sorts of disagreeable things, you see, Miss Evelyn, are talked about when a family is so changed as ours has been lately."

Evelyn sighed.

"Never mind, Lizzie," she said, quietly. "I do not wish to hear any more about it, for I have a great many things to make me sad just now, and you may be quite sure that Mr. Oliver knows a great deal better than we do, and we must leave everything to him. And if you have an opportunity you must only say that you are certain he would not wish to keep anyone in the house who was not fully contented with their situation, or who made impertinent comments on any arrangements of the house. You understand me, Lizzie?"

"Yes, Miss Evelyn; but you can imagine it is not very pleasant, and especially when I am so fond of you, my dear young lady, and like Mr. Oliver and Mr. Danvers better than any gentlemen I ever saw or heard of. And to think that they should be spoken of in that way is enough to break anyone's heart."

And the girl seemed ready to burst into tears, but for her doubts about the propriety of such an exhibition in the present occasion.

And Evelyn! Poor Evelyn, every word had unconsciously gone to her very heart and conjured up a thousand fears and vague misgivings that she dreaded to confess to herself.

(To be continued.)

THE HAMPTON MYSTERY.

CHAPTER XXXI.

If I stay, my rage
Will hurry me to mischief; better leave her
To certain ruin, than betray myself
To danger of it. Claphorne.

THE discovery of the continued existence of Geoffrey Trevalyan almost paralysed Lord Adlowe. He beheld all his hopes crumbling in the dust. His schemes in regard to the Lady Beatrice Hampton were now all futile. His expectations of succession to the Trevalyan estates had been rudely dashed to the ground. He realised, with an awful bitterness, what he was—poor, and in debt, his poverty made conspicuous by the mockery of a barren title.

A weaker villain would have despaired at this discovery, but Lord Adlowe was stung to a sullen and desperate fury.

"Love, fortune—all—swept from me at one blow!" he muttered, as he strode to and fro in his own room, his valet having departed to the servants' hall. "My hopes of a brilliant marriage dashed! The prize I have schemed and waited for all my life swept from my hands! Oh, a million curses on Beatrice Hampton and Geoffrey Trevalyan!" he hissed through his clinched teeth, as he shook his hand fiercely. "I could kill them both."

He glowered around him like a madman.

He was silent several minutes, during which he continued his hurried strides, panting heavily.

"What am I to do?" he whispered hollowly, at length. "I am not so weak as to let my enemies have the course to themselves. I must first understand my own position thoroughly. It will not be easy for me to marry an heiress after my long years of devotion to Beatrice Hampton. Besides, the marquise may drop off any day, and such a marriage would in that case be broken off by the discovery that I am not to be my uncle's heir. All my schemes must hinge on Geoffrey and Beatrice. But how?"

He racked his brain for a solution of the question.

"I have it!" he thought, after a pause, his face glowing savagely. "Geoffrey Trevalyan must be discovered and betrayed to the marquise, who will wreak upon him terrible revenge! Beatrice will die of a broken heart. She is too proud to live, disgraced and pitied by those she has always deemed her inferiors. Their children must be disposed of. I can plan how hereafter. As to this girl—this Giralda—upon whom my uncle has settled at his death sixty thousand pounds, what am I to do with her? She is bright, beautiful, innocent, intelligent, and high-bred. I might marry her myself. Since I cannot have the mother, why not the daughter?"

The idea seemed to strike him favourably.

"I will do it!" he mentally exclaimed, a jubilant thrill pulsing through his dark and scheming soul. "By making her my wife, I shall secure a fortune; I shall strike a deadly blow to the hearts of her parents, and also possess a shield against a possible disgrace and exposure. I will move quickly in the matter. I have no time to lose!"

He continued his musings for some minutes, his suddenly conceived project becoming a fixed determination. Gradually he assumed an outward calmness, although his soul seemed on fire within him. The air of his chamber grew stifling to him, and at last he quitted it to seek the fresh air and seclusion of the grounds.

In the lower hall he encountered Haskins, his valet. Motioning the man to follow him, he passed out of doors, making his way to the long-neglected garden, now an untrimmed wilderness of vines and shrubbery.

Lord Adlowe entered a little summer-house, off a bye-path, and full of dusky, slumberous shadows caused by the vines that covered it thickly. He sat down on a rustic bench, and awaited the arrival of his servant.

Haskins made his appearance a moment later.

"What has happened, my lord?" he exclaimed, starting at sight of his master's face. "You look like death!"

"I feel like death!" was the abrupt response. "Sit down. There is no danger of our being overheard here, as Miss Arevalo is out riding, and no one else ever comes into the garden. I want a serious talk with you. How deep is your devotion to me, Negwyn—that is, Haskins?"

"As deep as your lordship's purse," declared the valet, smiling.

Adlowe frowned.

"You can choose your words better than that," he observed, calmly. "You and I, my man, must sink or swim together. Without me you will sink to poverty and disgrace. Cling to me as to your plank of safety, assist me in all my designs, help me to carry out my plans, and I will make you a rich man."

Haskins stared wonderingly at his employer.

"I—I don't understand you, my lord!" he stammered.

"You don't. Well, then, Geoffrey Trevalyan is alive!"

Haskins sprang up, pale and frightened.

"Alive!" he ejaculated. "Has he come back, my lord? Is he here? Is the truth known?"

"No. Sit down. He is alive, and in England, but he would not dare to come to Trevalyan Park. His uncle would have him arrested if he did. He is in hiding, under an assumed name!"

Haskins resumed his seat, his alarm giving place to an expression of thoughtfulness. Adlowe was quick to read its meaning.

"You will never dare to betray me!" he said, coolly. "You would never dare to think of selling your secret to Lord Trevalyan, or to Geoffrey! In the first place I would pay you more for your silence than they would for your confession. In the second place, I am not a man to brook treachery!"

He bestowed a glance upon his valet that seemed to scorch and shrivel the soul of the latter.

"I have no intention of betraying you, my lord," the man said, trembling. "In for a penny, in for a pound! I'll stick to your lordship all through, if you'll do the right thing for me."

"You may depend upon me, Haskins. My plans are not fully matured yet. I must have time to think. I have just discovered that Geoffrey Trevalyan is alive, and my thoughts are still in a whirl!"

"How did you discover it, my lord?" inquired the man, beginning to recover from his fright.

"I saw a letter not meant for my eyes," declared Lord Adlowe. "You cannot guess? This Miss Arevalo, whom Lord Trevalyan had adopted—this mysterious young stranger who has worked such a change in my miserly old uncle and in the Park—is the daughter of Geoffrey Trevalyan!"

A cold sweat broke out on the valet's brow.

"She the daughter of Geoffrey Trevalyan?" he ejaculated, hoarsely. "I might have known it. She has got his very eyes. What is she doing here, my lord, in the very jaws of the lion?"

"She has come here for the purpose of clearing her father's name," said Lord Adlowe. "And also to worm herself into Lord Trevalyan's heart, and to beguile him of his savings! Besides these objects, she is bent on discovering her father's enemies, that a terrible vengeance may be wreaked upon them!"

The valet trembled to the very depths of his cowardly soul.

"What are you going to do, my lord?" he questioned. "Are you going to denounce her to the marquis? Are you going to have her turned away?"

"You are all wrong in your surmises, Haskins," said his lordship, with a brave and placid front, not deeming it polite to bare the weakness and anguish of his soul to his attendant. "I am going to marry the girl!"

"Marry her!" ejaculated the valet, in astonishment.

"Such is my intention. I have discovered the true state of affairs just in time, Haskins. They all think me in the dark. They are all waiting for Lord Trevalyan's death to spring a mine on me! It is here the game fairly begins! I have aimed all along at the possession of the Trevalyan estates. I aim at them still, and I mean to possess them!"

"But, my lord," suggested Haskins, "if Geoffrey Trevalyan has a daughter, he has also, perhaps, sons!"

"He has sons—two, I think!" remarked Adlowe, coolly.

"Then what are you to gain by a marriage with this girl?" questioned the bewildered valet.

"The case is just here," his lordship explained. "I see before me magnificent estates, yielding a princely revenue! Until this morning, I have deemed the same as already mine. Suddenly I behold two or three persons ahead of me in the race for the splendid prize! Do I give up, or turn back? No! I lay snares for them. I remove them from my path. Do you take my idea?"

"Yes, my lord," said the valet, in a whisper.

"You look at me in horror. Yet the thing is not so terrible. I think these boys are not aware of their name. I gathered that fact from an obscurely written sentence in the letter that told me so much. How easy to ship them off to some other portion of the world. How easy to provide for Geoffrey Trevalyan where he will not again be heard of. The rest will be easy!"

"It's an able plan," declared the valet, recovering his courage. "I will go in with you, heart and soul, my lord. As long as you don't mean downright murder," and his voice fell, "I'll work with you."

Adlowe smiled subtly. He knew his man thoroughly, and knew that so long as he kept displayed before his eyes a glittering reward, no one could tempt the fellow from him. They were bound together by too many ties of mutual villany to part easily.

"It is understood, then," said Adlowe, "that you are to assist me in sweeping all obstacles from my path. You shall name your own reward when I find myself undisputed master here!"

Haskins expressed his satisfaction at this promise, and declared that he would be faithful to his lordship's interests.

"How lucky it was," said Adlowe, musingly, "that I happened to look into the girl's room. I understand all their secrets, all their plots now. Miss Giralda Trevalyan—otherwise Arevalo—I am warned and armed against all your little plots. You will find, poor little fool, that it would have been better not to enter the lists against me."

It was just before this critical juncture that Giralda came leisurely along the bye-path, on her way to the dwelling, desiring to reach her room unseen after her ride. She had gained the very shadow of the vines embowering the summer house when Lord Adlowe spoke her name, and she halted abruptly, transfixed, as we have said, to the spot, an involuntary listener to the remainder of his speech.

She comprehended at once that her father's enemy was in possession of the secret of her identity. A realisation of her father's peril rushed over her soul. Sick and dizzy with terror, she clutched the vines to keep herself from falling.

"She shall have a chance, however, to save herself from destruction with the rest," observed Adlowe. "I will see her to-day on the subject. We shall not behave over a day or two, Haskins, as I want to report my discovery to the detective. It will greatly simplify matters for him if he is told at once that Geoffrey Trevalyan is alive and in England, and that it is to meet him that the Lady Beatrice Hampton effects such mysterious absences from her father's house. By Jove!" he added, darkly, "her ladyship has been living a hidden romance. I have returned to England just in time to turn her pretty comedy into tragedy."

Giralda gave utterance to an involuntary moan, and grasped more closely the rustling vines.

With a smothered oath, Lord Adlowe sprang from his seat, and gained the door at a bound.

He stood on the threshold a moment, looking at her, his eyes blazing, a fearful and deadly expression on his features.

Then he waved his hand at his servant, motioning him to depart, and said, slowly, with a strange smile:

"You are just in time, Miss Arevalo. I have something to say to you. Let me assist you to a seat!"

He took her arm and drew her into the little summer-house, at the same moment that Haskins quitted it at its opposite extremity. Giralda shrank from his touch with loathing, and sat down, trembling, pallid, and frightened.

"Quite a little adventure, Miss Arevalo," said her enemy, standing before her against the light, his arms folded, and his sinister visage glowing darkly upon her. "I do not know how much you have overheard, but you evidently have some comprehension of the state of affairs. Permit me to explain matters to you. As I was passing up to my room I found your door ajar, and naturally looked in, the room having been closed for many years, it having been the chamber of my misguided and unworthy cousin Geoffrey. The little portable writing-desk on the table in the bay window attracted my attention. It had been Geoffrey's in his boyhood. I looked into it; my eyes rested upon your unfinished letter; in short, Miss Arevalo, as I must still call you, I inadvertently stumbled upon your secret!"

He spoke deprecatingly, as if the discovery had forced itself upon him against his will.

Giralda roused herself from her drooping attitude, the colour glowed in her clear dark cheeks, her scarlet lips curled themselves into an expression of haughty scorn, and her eyes flashed and burned like living coals.

She comprehended perfectly Adlowe's baseness, and the manner in which he had possessed himself of her secret, and she could not disguise her contempt of him.

Until that moment, Lord Adlowe had regarded her as simply a lovely girl, but her sudden flash of spirit aroused him to the fact of her transcendent beauty, and inspired him with a sudden interest in her which was almost akin to love.

"I am not so base as you think me, Miss Arevalo," he said, apologetically. "I have not betrayed your secret to my uncle. Lord Trevalyan is still ignorant that his hated nephew lives. It is in your power to keep him in ignorance of the fact until his death places your father beyond his lordship's hatred!"

"Since you know so much of our affairs, Lord Adlowe," said Giralda, with a brave seeming, but with a sinking heart, "I will own to you that I am indeed the daughter of Geoffrey Trevalyan, the man whom you have traduced, maligned, and cruelly injured! You know him to be good and true. If you would, you could clear him of the foul disgrace that clings to his name! I came to Trevalyan Park, not knowing my relationship to the marquis. I have stayed here hoping to clear my father's name, and to reconcile him and his uncle! If there is any pity in your soul, leave me to my work!"

Lord Adlowe smiled.

"You have succeeded very well in your 'work' so far!" he remarked. "As your father will inherit the title and estates, Lord Trevalyan would look at the matter in this light, if he knew who you were."

Giralda shivered as with cold. She had not thought before that such an interpretation could be put upon her stay at the Park.

"The Lady Beatrice knew very well what she was about when she sent you here," observed Adlowe, coarsely. "By-the-bye, Miss Giralda, where is this hidden home of yours? Where does your father, the Count of Arevalo, this Spanish grandee, live?"

"You will suffer me to go on to the house," said Giralda, arising with dignity, her clear dark cheeks strangely pallid. "You can certainly have nothing more to say to me, Lord Adlowe!"

"But I have something more to say to you," said Adlowe, his anger rising. "Shall I say it here or before my uncle?"

Giralda resumed her seat.

"You do not seem to be aware of the deadly peril menacing your father," continued Adlowe—"of the scandal that will tear in shreds the hitherto spotless fame of the Lady Beatrice Hampton—of the disgrace of your brothers! Lord Hampton, your grandfather, is a proud man. How will he bear to hear of his daughter's long-concealed secret marriage, of the existence of his daughter's children, when that knowledge will come to him, first from the witness-box, and from every newspaper in the kingdom?"

You hold in your hand a cord, by pulling which you can bring down upon the heads of all whom you love an awful avalanche of disgrace and woe. Shall I show you how to save them?"

Giralda assented with a low, wailing cry.

"Accept the protection of my name? Become my wife. In that case, no harm shall come to your loved ones. I will even agree to reconcile your father and the marquis!"

"I cannot! I cannot marry you!" cried Giralda, shrinking from him. "It is to you that my father owes his life-long disgrace. It is to you my uncle owes his years of misery. I would rather die than become your wife!"

She arose as she spoke, and faced him bravely, her eyes, so innocent and fearless, looking to him like the eyes of his wronged and banished cousin.

"And you would rather your father should die?" suggested Adlowe.

The question shook the young girl's composure.

"I cannot wrong my own soul, and prove false to all his teachings, even to save dear papa," she said, in a faltering voice. "I will share his disgrace—I will die with him!"

"With your mother's reproaches, and your brothers' cries ringing in your ears!" said her pitiless enemy. "You prefer your own girlish fancies to their happiness. Such is the strength of filial affection!" he added, sneeringly.

"Lord Adlowe," said Giralda, "you are no judge of any sort of affection. But I will not waste words with you. I cannot go to my uncle Trevalyan and tell him who I am, for he might judge me as you have done, and I should thus injure my dear father instead of helping him. I am going away from the Park."

"To warn your father that all is discovered, and that he must fly? No, you had better remain here for the present, unless you wish to precipitate the very evil you dread," declared Adlowe, significantly. "Once more, I offer you marriage. You know what a refusal will entail. Do you still refuse me?"

"I do. I will never do evil that good may come," said the girl, bravely. "I will never marry you!"

"Then blame yourself for whatever happens to you and yours!" cried Adlowe, savagely. "You have rejected all chance of safety. So be it!"

He turned, and stalked out of the summer-house, leaving the maiden to her terror and despair.

He had not taken a dozen steps when he encountered his valet, who carried in his hand a sealed envelope.

"A despatch from town, my lord," said Haskins, presenting the missive. "Mr. Black, the butler, has just come from Trevalyan village, where this was given to him."

Adlowe tore open the despatch at once. It was, as he expected, from Rush, the detective, and was as brief as significant, running as follows:

"LORD ADLOWE.—I have run the game to earth. Come at once. RUSH."

Adlowe's face lighted up with a lurid glow.

"He has tracked her ladyship!" he exclaimed. "This is well. We will go back to-night, Haskins. I mean to probe this secret to the bottom. But first," he added, with a backward glance at the arbour, "I must prevent any danger from this girl. She means to be off for home to-night secretly, to warn her father of his danger. If she succeeds in warning him, I shall have trouble. We must prevent her escape!"

"But how, my lord?"

"Come up to my room, and we will see. I will devise a plan, which you shall execute, which will remove the girl from my path, and bend her to my designs. Come!"

He led the way into the dwelling, Haskins following closely in his steps.

CHAPTER XXXII.

No thought within her bosom stirs,
But wakes some feeling dark and dread.

Phoebe Carey.

LORD ADLOWE had read correctly the expression of Giralda's face. The maiden had indeed formed the instinctive resolution of hurrying at once to her father and warning him of his peril. The thought that she had been unconsciously the means of his betrayal to his enemy filled her young soul with remorseful anguish. She hurried, with tottering steps, up to her own room, and sat down before her fire, shivering and trembling.

How suddenly all her bright hopes had failed her! Her thoughts were in a chaos. Her soul was wrapped in sudden darkness. She could not weep. Her

sorrow was dumb. She was conscious only of the impending ruin and disgrace of all whom she loved, of the deadly peril menacing her father.

And then, through all her grief, came back to her mind the coarse insinuations of Lord Adlowe that she had been sent to Trevalyan Park to win the love of the marquis, with the view of inheriting his savings. Her cheeks burned hotly at the insult.

"But his lordship will think so!" she murmured aloud, unconsciously. "He will never know that I really and truly loved him! He will think me base and wicked!"

The tears came now in a tropical shower. Despite his faults, she tenderly loved the gray-haired, grand old man, whose vindictive hatred of her father was the cause of all her woe.

"I cannot see him again," she thought, when she had grown calmer. "His keen eyes would read my soul. I could never bear his scorn and anger. And I could never keep from him the secret of papa's assumed name and whereabouts. I must steal away from this second home as I stole away from the first, in secret, alone, and at night! I must get back to the Laurels, and warn papa before Lord Adlowe can see his detective!"

Her brain grew clearer, and her sad heart grew resolute. She arose, and took out from her desk the fatal letter which had wrought so much sorrow, reading it over, and putting it in her bosom. Then, with a feverish energy, she packed away in their boxes all the costly presents Lord Trevalyan had bestowed upon her, including those he had given her in London. Her next step was to make her travelling toilette, and to secure on her person the letters she had that morning received from home, and then she resumed her seat and her despairing thoughts.

For a long time she sat there in a sort of stupor, once vaguely conscious of a summons to dinner, to which she managed to reply that she was not well and would not go down. Dolly, the little Welsh maid, entered the room once, but Giralda gently dismissed her for the day. Soon afterwards good Mrs. Plumpton made her appearance, bearing a tray of delicacies, a troubled look on her motherly countenance.

"You are not ill, miss?" she asked, alarmed at the pallor of the sorrowful young face, and at the hunted expression in the lovely eyes of the young girl. "You do look ill, that's a fact. Shall I send for a doctor, miss?"

"Oh, no, Mrs. Plumpton," replied Giralda, rousing herself, yet speaking with a strange languor that farther frightened the good dame. "I feel tired—"

"Tired! You look that, poor dear! And if you ain't sitting in that hard, straight-backed chair! Just let me take care of you, miss!"

She deposited the tray on a small table, and drew up to the fire Giralda's luxurious easy-chair, with its white covers, gently compelling the young girl to occupy it. She placed a hassock for her feet, and then proceeded to carve the tempting little dinner, as if for a helpless little child.

"My lord is distressed on account of your sudden illness, Miss Giralda," she said. "He's as gloomy and cross as if he'd lost his best friend. Ah, he loves you, miss, as if you were his own kin! And Lord Adlowe looked gloomy too at the table. His man says that his lordship is going back by the 10-50 train. He makes short visits!"

Giralda's heart gave a quick bound. She intended going by the same train, but trusted to escape his lordship's observation in the darkness and hurry, with the aid of a veil and thick shawl by which she hoped to conceal and disguise her figure.

"Haskins says," continued the gossiping housekeeper, "that Lord Adlowe had a despatch, hurrying him back to town. I suppose it was from the Lady Beatrice Hampton, that they say is engaged to marry his lordship. Somehow," she added, musingly, "that Haskins reminds me of someone I used to know—I can't tell who. He says he was never in these parts before. But, dear heart! You don't eat anything, Miss Arevalo!"

"I cannot eat," said Giralda. "I am not well, Mrs. Plumpton. If you don't mind," she added, gently, "I think solitude will be the best thing for me. Please give my love to my uncle Trevalyan, and say to him that I shall not be down to tea!"

She leaned her head back wearily, and Mrs. Plumpton, pitying her, went out softly, bearing to Lord Trevalyan the report that his ward was suffering from a distracting headache, and must not on account be disturbed.

This report did not prevent the marquis from stealing up the stairs several times and listening at Giralda's door, his rugged features wearing an expres-

sion of tender solicitude and yearning. The maiden had become inexpressibly dear to him, and it was with difficulty he could restrain himself from breaking in upon her seclusion, and offering her his sympathy and ministrations.

"Poor child!" he muttered, as he hobbled down the stairs with his staff for the third time. "I would gladly bear the pain for her. I hope she'll be well by morning. The house is a desolate old prison without her."

Meanwhile, unconscious of his solicitude, Giralda bore her griefs in a dumb silence. As night approached, she began to feel it impossible to go away without a word of farewell to his lordship. His affection for her, and unquestioning faith in her, demanded at least a word of explanation in regard to the cause of her abrupt departure. But she could not face him. Sobbing pitifully, for she loved him, she wrote him a little note, intending to leave it on her desk, that he might receive it in the morning, when she should be far away.

She began by calling him her dear uncle, and assuring him that she loved him and was deeply grateful for all his lovingkindness to her. Then she said that circumstances had arisen which compelled her immediate departure from the Park, and that she dared not see him again, lest her strength and self-command should fail her. She begged him to destroy the will he had recently made in her favour; and whatever he might hear to her disadvantage when she was gone, to believe always that she loved him sincerely, and with no hope or thought of a pecuniary reward. This letter, written in a tremulous hand and blotted with tears, she sealed, addressed, and laid upon her desk.

By this time the evening shadows had fallen. Dolly came in with lighted wax candles, and retreated, after stirring the fire and drawing the curtains.

Remembering the long and tiresome walk to the station, and the necessity that existed for a secret departure, Giralda put on her cloak, hat, and veil, took her shawl and travelling bag on her arm, and with a last glance around the room, and at the picture of Geoffrey Trevalyan on the wall, stole down the stairs and out by the side porch into the overgrown garden.

The night was mild, and not dark. Every object in the near landscape was plainly perceptible through the light, pale gloom. Giralda stole around to the front of the mansion, and halted in the shadow of the tulip tree.

The drawing-room was lighted, and the curtains were not drawn. Lord Adlowe sat at the table, a book in his hands, a watchful expression on his face. Lord Trevalyan sat by the hearth, gloomy and moody, a strange and new expression of sadness on his grand and massive features.

Giralda regarded him a moment, choking back a sob. Then she turned resolutely away, and hurried down the avenue towards the lodge-gates, despair in her soul.

She was going away from her father's rightful home, her work unfinished, her hopes all crushed. She could never come back again, she said to herself, in Lord Trevalyan's lifetime. She need never think now of reconciling those two noble, but estranged souls. She need never dream of clearing her father's name of its stain of disgrace. If she could only save him from arrest, and get him away from his enemies, it was all she hoped for now.

She diverted her course before reaching the lodge, proceeding along a bye-path to an open part of the high wall which was under repair. She passed out through this gap into the road, and hurried along in the direction of Trevalyan village.

She had no thought of fear as she traversed the wild mountain solitude through the night shadows. She did not even think of herself, her whole mind being wrapped up in her loved ones, and the evil tidings she was taking to them.

There seemed to be no one stirring abroad, no farmers' waggons, no tramps, no vagrants. She did not meet a soul.

"I shall not be missed to-night," she thought, "and by morning I shall be at the Laurels. I must procure my ticket at the moment of arriving at the station, and then keep out of sight, lest Lord Adlowe suspect my design."

Her course thus marked out plainly, she resumed her sorrowful musings.

The three miles were half traversed, when, tired and worn, she sat down on a stone by the wayside for a brief rest. A sensation of relief was stealing over her frame, when a rumbling sound reached her ears as of a farmer's waggon, approaching by the route she had come.

She drew back a little into the shadow of the hedge, waiting for the waggon to pass.

It came nearer, into plain view. As she had guessed, from the noise it made, it was simply a farmer's light waggon, with two seats. It was drawn by two rough, strong mountain ponies, and occupied by two men, one of whom sat on either side.

Giralda noticed that they looked sharply at the hedges as they came near, and she shrank back still farther with a sudden sensation of dread.

Suddenly, when the vehicle was nearly abreast of her, it came to a halt, and the man who was driving leaned forward, exclaiming:

"Halloo there, miss! Which way are you going?"

Farther attempt at concealment was useless. The sharp eyes of the driver had discovered her. Giralda answered, with pretended coolness:

"I am going on to the village."

"Won't you have a ride, miss? Can take you over as well as not?"

"No, I thank you," replied the young girl, her heart fluttering. "I prefer to walk."

At this juncture, the man on the rear seat leaped lightly to the ground, and approached the maiden. She recognised him at once as Lord Adlowe.

With a cry of terror she turned to run.

In a moment he was in full pursuit. In another moment he had overtaken her and grasped her by the arm.

"I see you are afraid of me," he observed, drawing her towards the waggon. "It is well that you should be. You thought to escape me—to flee to your home—to warn your father? You have but run into a snare! You are in a trap, from which you cannot escape!"

Giralda panted in terror.

"Let me go! Oh, let me go!" she pleaded, struggling frantically. "Oh, Lord Adlowe, as you hope for mercy, release me, and let me go!"

Adlowe looked down on her anguished face with a pitiless smile.

"Will you be my wife?" he demanded.

"Never! Never!" cried the maiden, desperately. "Oh, I cannot be your wife! You know I cannot! You have no right to detain me in this manner. I demand my freedom!"

"Haskins," observed his lordship, "keep a tight rein on your horses. I will take care of the girl."

He lifted her as he spoke, pinioning her arms in his swift grasp, and placed her in the waggon, springing in after her.

Giralda uttered a loud and terrified scream.

"You had better be quiet!" he said, in a menacing tone, all the fiendish cruelty of his nature finding expression in his looks and manner at that moment.

"Another scream like that and I shall be compelled to gag you!"

Giralda was for a moment dumb with terror.

"Haskins," said Lord Adlowe, "get out and hand up the young lady's shawl and bag. Give me the reins."

Haskins obeyed, then returned to his seat.

"What does this outrage mean?" demanded Giralda, recovering her self-command. "Are you going to take me to the Lady Beatrice Hampton, Lord Adlowe?"

"No. I intend to make you my wife. Your rejection of me has no effect whatever upon my intention. You are but little more than a child, and cannot know your own mind. A little prompt severity will bring you to your senses."

"No severity can ever force me to marry you, Lord Adlowe!" asserted Giralda, with quivering lips.

"Then I will keep you as a hostage to be ransomed by a sum that will make me independent," declared his lordship, with a heartless laugh. "You are my prisoner, and such you will remain for the present."

"Not long!" said Giralda, with a flash of spirit. "Lord Trevelyan will discover my situation, and rescue me! He is too keen not to find out that I am a prisoner."

"Do not flatter yourself with such fruitless hopes. I have guarded my tracks too well for that. Why, you yourself have left a note, explaining to his lordship that you were going away. I shall return immediately to the Park, and leave in an hour in the family chariot. My uncle thinks me in my own room at this moment. How is he ever to suspect the truth?"

Giralda uttered a low, sighing moan.

"I expected that you would make your escape tonight to warn your father of his danger," continued Adlowe, mercilessly. "I prepared for it by send-

ing Haskins to the village for this trap, which has waited near the Park since nightfall. I saw you as you took a last look into the drawing-room, although you did not dream that I was on the watch for you. Haskins is my man, devoted to me, body and soul. His interests and mine are identical. He knows of a good place on the coast where no one would ever dream of looking for you. He went there this afternoon to make arrangements for your stay there. He will take you there to-night, while I go on to London."

Giralda looked from Adlowe to his servant. There was no comfort or hope to be extracted from that stolid face, and the small eyes, gleaming with the fires of cupidity which his master had lighted. The recent cowardly fears of Haskins were all lulled now, for he had only a woman to deal with. He had embarked in Adlowe's nefarious cause with heart and soul, as his master had said, fully satisfied that he would thereby serve his best interests, and save himself from possible harm.

"You have no pity—no mercy?" the young girl asked, piteously.

"None," said Adlowe, smiling like a demon. "If you will promise to be my wife, you shall go with me to London. Otherwise you will stay here."

"I cannot promise," moaned Giralda, her whole being in an agony of grief. "Better death than such a marriage!"

"Suit yourself. Such a resolution cannot last long. You must permit me to guard against the chances of your escape," and Adlowe drew from under the seat a coil of rope, with which he proceeded to bind his captive.

It seemed as if he had read her heart. Giralda's last hope of escape left her now. Despite her struggles, Adlowe, whose nerves were of iron, bound her to the seat, and tied her hands behind her. He then flung her shawl around her, pinning it carefully, to conceal her bonds.

"Had I better gag her, Haskins?" asked the titled ruffian, with another cruel smile.

"Oh, no!" cried Giralda. "I will not cry out. I will not call for help."

"I trust to your honour," declared he who had none. "Now I must go back to the Park. Yet another word, Miss Arvalo. I received a despatch directly after my interview with you, summoning me back to town. It was from a detective in my employ, and informs me that he has 'run his game to earth.' In other words, he has tracked your mother to your father's house. To-morrow the whole secret will be in my hands."

With this last shot, which almost struck Giralda senseless, Adlowe commanded Haskins to move on. The valet turned the horses, and the next moment they were speeding along the road towards Trevelyan Park. Not a word was spoken on the way. The waggon halted near the lodge gates, permitting Adlowe to alight, and Haskins then whipped up the horses, hurrying towards the sea, over the road Giralda had passed so gaily that morning on Zulime's back.

As they rode onward, the maiden made various appeals to the valet's heart. She might as well have appealed to stone. She offered him bribes, but Haskins turned a deaf ear to all her pleadings. He deemed his present course the safest. He had been too deeply implicated in Adlowe's treacherous schemes to dare to betray him.

When they arrived at the spot where the bridge had been swept away that morning, Giralda felt a momentary hope that farther progress in that direction would be barred. But Haskins, after a brief glance of surprise, turned up the stream to a ford at some distance, betraying a familiarity with the scene that was surprising in one who professed to be such a stranger in the neighbourhood.

The ford crossed, the road was regained, and the journey progressed swiftly. They encountered no one. The lights of the Eagle's Eyrie—the abode of the young Lord Grosvenor, who had rescued Giralda Inez so gallantly that morning—gleamed like stars from the high bluff, and a nest of glow-worms seemed resting on the plateau at its foot, where the hamlet was situated. Every moment these lights became brighter and nearer. Giralda fancied that her captor was taking her to the hamlet.

But he turned aside into a bye-road before reaching it, and struck down the coast, away from the Eyrie and the hamlet.

"How much farther have we to go?" asked Giralda chilled by the rude sea winds, and affrighted at the sombre darkness settling slowly now upon shore and sea.

"Only a couple of miles, miss. Do you see that

light from the rocks away up yonder?" and Haskins pointed with his whip to a gleam to the southward against the darkening sky. "That light comes from your future prison, miss. You are expected, and the light is a signal. It'll take us half-an-hour, maybe longer, to mount the bluff, but you'll be perfectly safe when you get there."

He chuckled under his breath, and whipped up his ponies, while Giralda sank back, hopeless and despairing.

(To be continued.)

FACETIÆ.

SEWING machines that hem and do the lock stitch ought to be made of hemlock.

WHY is a bookkeeper like a hen? Because they both have to scratch for a living.

A BALL struck a little boy in the eye last week. Strange to say the ball immediately came out of his mouth.

SIDNEY SMITH said to an ex-member of Parliament for Edinburgh that all he wanted to make him perfect was a few brilliant flashes of silence.

A LINE in one of Moore's songs reads thus: "Our couch shall be roses bespangled with dew." To which a sensible girl replied: "I would give me the rheumatism, and so it would you."

A BOSTON paper is "in favour of women voting if they want to." A western paper "would like to see the man who could make them vote if they didn't want to."

A WOODMAN once sharply asked his lazy boy how many logs he had cut. "Well," was the reply, "when I have cut this, and that there, and got two others done, there will be four cut already—and it's quite early yet."

AT no moment of difficulty does a husband know his utter helplessness, and draw so closely to his wife's side for comfort and assistance, as when he wants a button sewed on to his shirt collar.

A SHARP-TALKING lady was reproved by her husband, who requested her to keep her tongue in her mouth. "My dear," responded the wife, "it is against the law to carry concealed weapons."

"I BELIEVE my fate will be like that of Abel," said a wife one day. "Why so?" inquired her husband. "Because Abel was killed by a club, my dear, and your club will kill me if you continue to go to it every night."

NE SUTOR.—It is reported that Tom King, the prize-fighter, has been converted, and has taken to preaching. We should think his arguments have scarcely as much of the "knock-down" character as formerly.—*Fun.*

A LAUGHING ASS.—South Bend, Indiana, has a "champion laugher," who claims to laugh "louder, longer, heartier, and more scientifically than any other man, black or white, in Indiana." "Is his 'scientific' laugh produced by laughing gas?—*Fun.*

IT HAS been satisfactorily demonstrated that every time a husband scolds his wife he adds a wrinkle to his face. It is thought the announcement will have a salutary effect, especially as it is understood that every time a husband smiles on his wife it will remove one of the wrinkles.

A CELEBRATED scientific gentleman is trying to make it appear that the moon is only a mass of luminous vapour. He ought to know; he seems to be a mass of vapour himself; though if he shines by borrowed light we should be pleased to know what Jack o' Lantern lent it to him.

HAPPY MAN!—Among the advertisements in a daily paper for lodgers, we find one which says that a single gentleman may have "partial board in a house kept by a lady and her daughter. Buses and boats convenient." We only wish we were a single gentleman.—*Punch.*

A YOUNG enthusiast was talking to his intended, urging upon her speedy marriage and a start to spend the honeymoon in California. "I tell you," said he, his face glowing with enthusiasm, "California is the paradise of this earth. There's no use talking!"

"No use talking!" exclaimed the lady, with a look of some surprise. "No use of talking!" he replied. "Well, if there's no use talking," said the lady, "what in the name of sense do you want of women there? I don't go."

A YOUTH was lately leaving his aunt's house after a visit, when, finding it was beginning to rain, he caught up an umbrella that was snugly placed in a corner, and was proceeding to open it, when the old lady, who for the first time observed his movements, sprang towards him, exclaiming: "No, no, that you never shall! I've had that umbrella twenty-three years, and it has never been wet yet; and I'm sure it shan't be wetted now!"

NOR SOFT.—A kind-hearted and witty clergyman, entering the house of one of his elders one morning, found the old man unmercifully whipping one of his

sons, a lad about fourteen years old, and at once commenced interceding for the boy. The deacon defended himself by saying that youth must be early trained in the way it should go. "It was best to make an impression when the wax was soft." "Ay," said the pastor, "but that don't hold here, for the whacks were not soft." The deacon let the boy go.

So soon as a man starts out for a reformer he lets his hair grow long. So soon as a woman starts in the same business, she cuts hers off short. Does not this show a natural tendency on the part of these two, the one to approach the character of a man, and the other that of a woman?

DARKNESS VISIBLE.

ONE night in a thunderstorm, we thought the little ones all asleep, when a little voice from the "trundle-bed" called out: "Oh, mother, the darkness is winking! First it shuts up, and then it shuts down."

SATISFACTORY?

Old Gentleman (whose wife is young and pretty).—"Well, doctor, and how do you find my wife this morning?"

Doctor (in a fit of mental abstraction).—"Oh! lovely!"—Will o' the Wisp.

IN THE REV. NIMROD'S COUNTRY.

Native to Inquiring Angler.—"Any vishin' free about 'ere? Aw, iss! You can vish anywhere wi' only askin' the farmer's leave. 'Ceptin' in pa'son's right. He's the only visherman in the parish—you won't get no leave o' he!"—Fun.

A GREAT DESIDERATUM!

THERE is an excellent invention in umbrellas, called "The Desideratum," in which the silk is woven of an extra thickness at the edges of the folds where it is most exposed to wear and tear. The principle might be applied with great advantage in other cases. We fancy Nature herself has taken the hint; for we have observed in the case of many who are supposed to do a great deal of hard-work an extra thickness in that part.—Fun.

IN-CONTENT-ABLE.

Lord Elcho suggests an international rifle contest between England and America, and says that "no-where would our cousins be more heartily welcomed than at the butts at Wimbledon." Our American cousins are capital shots; the contest would, no doubt, be as close as at the boat-race; and if the Yankees didn't beat, both events would be all-but!—Judy.

THAT'S HOW IT MUST HAVE BEEN.

Gretchen (in her native tongue).—"I can't understand you, sir. You seem to have learni' German; but perhaps it's because you pronounce it so badly."

Smith (an Englishman).—"On the contrary, I pronounce it too well. To make yourself understood in your language, you oughtn't to pronounce it at all!"—Judy.

THE ST. LEGER.—RACING ANOMALY.

When Pero Gomez won the race, it was, however, to the backers of Pretender decidedly Martyrdom.—Will-o-the-Wisp.

WARN THE KEYHOLE OF THE STREET-DOOR.

Master (in the passage).—"Hi! Stop! If it's Mr. and Mrs. Toady, say we're out of town."

Maid: "Yes, sir."

Miss Toady (on the doorstep).—"There they are, Pa! I can see them! They've just come in from the garden; and now they're running upstairs!"—Punch.

A POSER.

The worthy gentleman who rules the rising generation of boys in a certain town, had occasion recently to correct a little boy named Johnny. Now Johnny got into a fit of what is called "sulks," because he was whipped, and in order to convince him that he was justly and necessarily punished, his teacher had recourse to the following argument:

"Well, Johnny, suppose you were riding a big horse to water, and a keen switch in your hand, and all at once the horse were to stop and refuse to go any further, what would you do?"

Johnny stifled his sobs for a moment, and looking up through his tears, innocently replied: "I'd cluck to him, sir."

"But, Johnny, suppose he wouldn't go for your clucking, what then?"

"I'd get down and lead him, sir."

"And what if he were obstinate, and would not let you lead him?"

"Why, I'd take off his bridle and turn him loose, and walk home, sir."

"You may go and take your seat, Johnny."

Johnny could not be made to see the necessity for using the switch.

RETURN good for evil, as the thief observed to himself when he changed a bad half-crown.—Will-o-the-Wisp.

A SHREWD BARGAIN.

Mr. O'Dolan, the proprietor of a grocery, calls upon his wholesale dealer for the purpose of renewing his stock of sugar.

Grocer: "Well, you may take it at 4 $\frac{1}{2}$."

Mr. O'D. (with a passion for beating down): "Ah, that's too much, I'll give you 4 $\frac{1}{2}$."

Grocer: "Well, pay me the cash, and you can take it. Though you drive a hard bargain."

THE SENSITIVE FLOWER.

I KNOW a flower, a sensitive flower,
That blooms in a garden fair;
Its leaves will droop and its petals shut
At the slightest chill of the air—
A sensitive flower, a flower more rare
Than ever was wreathed in a maiden's hair.

It is a gentle, delicate thing,
Though with a giant power,
And winds that harm not tender plants
Will blight this sensitive flower—
This sensitive flower, this flower more rare
Than ever was wreathed in a maiden's hair.

It buds and blossoms in the humblest cot,
It springs in the palace high;
In the prison cell and the warrior's tent
Its fragrance is ever nigh—
This sensitive flower, this flower more rare
Than ever was wreathed in a maiden's hair.

It bringeth joy to the laughing child,
It lighteth the maiden's eye;
And age grows young, and grief is calm,
When its perfume is wafted by—
This sensitive flower, this flower more rare
Than ever was wreathed in a maiden's hair.

Oh! Love is the flower, the sensitive flower,
And the heart its garden fair;
And there it blooms in the light of smiles,
And shodgeth its perfume rare—
This sensitive flower, this flower more rare
Than ever was wreathed in a maiden's hair.

But sudden it droops when slight or scorn
Darkens its golden sky;
Though warm'd by smiles, 'twill bloom in death,
And laugh when the storm goes by—
This sensitive flower, this flower more rare
Than ever was wreathed in a maiden's hair.

C. D. S.

GEMS.

A FALSE friend is like the shadow on the sun-dial, appearing in sunshine but vanishing in shade. He who does his best, however little, is always to be distinguished from him who does nothing.

GRIEF kites two hearts in closer bonds than happiness ever can; and common sufferings are far stronger links than common joys.

No man is more nobly born than another unless he is born with better abilities and a more amiable disposition.

NEVER be above your calling, or be afraid to appear dressed in accordance with the business you are performing.

THE first of all virtues is innocence; the next is modesty. If we banish modesty out of the world, she carries away with her half the virtue that is in it.

WE learn wisdom from failure more than from success; we often discover what will not do by finding out what will not do, and he who never made a mistake, never made a discovery.

STATISTICS.

NEW ZEALAND GOLD.—The importance of the position acquired by New Zealand as a gold-producing quarter of the world will be inferred from the annexed statement, showing the value of the gold exports from the colony during the ten years ending 1867, and the value of the aggregate imports of Australasian gold into the United Kingdom during the same period:

Year.	Expts, New Zealand		Imports, Australasian		Year.	Expts, New Zealand		Imports, Australasian	
	Gold.	U. K.	Gold.	U. K.		Gold.	U. K.	Gold.	U. K.
1858	233,443	49,064,753	1863	2,432,479	5,935,368				
1859	28,427	8,624,586	1864	1,857,847	2,456,371				
1860	17,585	6,719,000	1865	2,252,689	5,051,170				
1861	732,657	6,331,225	1866	2,897,412	6,839,674				
1862	1,891,389	6,704,753	1867	2,724,276	5,801,207				

The total exports of New Zealand gold last year were probably nearly, if not quite, equal to those of 1867; in the current year some increase may be anticipated in consequence of the extraordinary quantity of gold obtained from the Thames field. But for the great development of New Zealand gold mining

the yield of Australasian gold would have materially fallen off.

FLAX TRADE OF IRELAND.—Ireland makes great progress in the manufacture of flax. In 1839 9,017 persons were employed in this branch of industry; in 1850 the number had risen to 21,121, in 1856 it was 28,573, in 1861 33,525, and in 1868 no less than 57,050. The number of persons employed in flax factories in England and Wales in 1868 was but 21,859, in Scotland 40,920, in Ireland 57,050. There were in Ireland, in 1868, 143 flax factories, containing 894,273 spinning spindles and 12,963 power-looms; in 1861 there were only 100 factories, with 592,981 spindles and 4,666 power-looms. The amount of moving power has increased from 10,710 steam and 2,884 water, in 1861, to 21,595 steam and 3,466 water in 1868. The flax factories in Ireland have always employed twice as many females as males, and in 1862 the numbers had become 9,953 males and 23,572 females. In 1868 the number of males employed was 16,782, and the number of females was 40,268. The number of children under 13 years of age employed in Irish flax factories was 668 in 1861, and 1,374 in 1868. But the children under 13 is less than 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the whole number of persons employed. The flax manufacture is found in 14 counties of Ireland. Antrim takes the lead, and employs nearly 32,000 persons in this industry, a number unequalled in any other county in the United Kingdom.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

FARMER'S SHOE GREASE.—Put into some fire-proof vessel $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of lard, or soft grease like lard, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of tallow—beef or mutton tallow— $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of beeswax, half-a-pint of neatfoot oil, three or four tablespoonfuls of lampblack, and a piece of gum-camphor, as large as a hen's egg. Melt the ingredients over a slow fire, and stir them thoroughly after they are melted. Never heat it so hot as to make it boil. Soft grease which has salt in it will not injure the leather. Now, have the leather warm, and warm the grease, not so that it will flow, but have it so soft that it may be put on with a brush. Should the leather seem to need it give the shoes or boots an oiling occasionally. It is not best to dry this shoe grease all in before the fire, but allow it to remain on the surface of the leather. A light coat of this kind will exclude the water, even if the boots are exposed to the wet all day. This shoe grease will not injure leather by rendering it hard and inelastic. When a man's boots are exposed to wet he should wash them clean at night, and hang them up in the kitchen, where the leather will dry gradually, and put on a little grease every morning. It is far better to grease a little often than to grease bountifully every ten or twelve days. Leather should not be allowed to become very dry before greasing. Always apply the grease as soon as the leather is almost dry; then the leather will be pliable, and never become hard. Nothing injures boots or shoes more than to set them aside to dry when covered with dirt. Keep boots and shoes away from the fire when they are liable to be heated. Heating the leather injures it.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THERE is promise of a very large and fine orange crop in Florida.

MR. HANS BUEK proposes to establish a life-ship, really an enlarged lifeboat, that shall be able to operate beyond the area reached by our excellent lifeboats themselves.

A MARBLE cenotaph, to the memory of the late distinguished astronomer, the Earl of Rosse, has just been erected in the church at Parsinstown, Ireland.

THERE is an extraordinary dearth of peaches this year in France. The market-gardeners of Montreuil—the great source of the Paris supply—estimate the deficiency of their products, as compared with an average crop, at 80,000.

THE equestrian statue of the Queen, for Liverpool, now being completed by Mr. Thornycroft, is not likely to be placed in its position in front of St. George's Hall during the present mayoralty. It will probably be about the Christmas or New Year holidays ere it is ready to be publicly unveiled.

WILL OF AN ITALIAN ARCHITECT.—Signor Palletti has left his whole fortune now found to amount to 400,000 francs, to his native place, Modena. The syndic of that city, however, has just been apprised that the executors will not part with the property until Modena is placed in a position of independence, and that, in default of this—that is, the restoration of the old duchy of Modena—the bequest will be diverted to the city of Rome.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

T. A. P. (Ilkerton).—Try a preparation of water colours mixed with size.

MARY WILSON'S lines on Happiness are very far below our idea of a possible poetical contribution.

T. S. W.—Use cold-drawn lined oil, and rub with a soft cloth for some time. You must lay on and rub hard.

W. A. T.—Your second communication has reached us. If you have confidence, persevere.

SWALL OF THE OCTOPUS.—Your application is deficient in particulars necessary to show that it is sent in good faith.

G. F. B. (Sheffield).—Your former communication was duly answered, not indeed in the number to which you allude, but in a subsequent number.

ROBERT BRUCE.—Your handwriting will do. Chambers's "Book-keeping" is a valuable work and will suit you. Any bookseller in your town will procure it for you.

M. C. BIRD.—The tale is not suitable for our columns. We cannot break the rule as to manuscripts, which is published in every issue of THE LONDON READER.

G. F. H.—The metre of the lines is bad, and the sentiment which pervades them is unreal. It is difficult to understand what ideas you intend to convey by means of them.

COURT A.—You are too young. Moreover, you have forwarded neither name nor address, which, though not always required, are essential in communications similar to that you have sent us.

NOVICE.—The frosting of silver is accomplished in the course of the manufacture of the article. It is part of the handicraft learned by those who are apprenticed to a silversmith.

P. B. O'F.—Your verses are declined. If there be any attraction in them to a superficial reader it entirely passes away upon consideration. They will not bear a second perusal.

A FOREIGNER.—At the present day there is amongst the aristocracy a fashion of taking tea about 5 or 6 o'clock, that is before dinner, the hour for which is usually between 7 and 8 p.m.

S. G.—The first number of "Everybody's Journal," was presented gratis with No. 332 of THE LONDON READER. If you did not get a copy the fault must rest with your newsvendor.

ASTRONOMER.—Zadkiel is a fabulous name. Consult his almanac for amusement, if you will, but dream not of any other "consultations." A man's future destiny results from his own actions not from any so-called horoscope or divination.

A LAW CLERK.—Shaking hands proceed from nervousness or debility. The remedy is to be found in the restoration of the general health to its proper tone. Ahn's books on the French language are good introductory works. They are published by Allman, in Oxford Street. The price is about eighteenpence each.

EDWARD BEATTIE.—The courteous reply of the eminent man of which you have forwarded us a copy, must not be taken to express any opinion whatever upon the literary merit of the lines. We have perused them with some care and fail to perceive in them any quality which would entitle them to a place in our columns.

E. SPURR.—The ancient Greek language is what is called a "dead language," and differs from the language spoken and written by Greeks of the present day. A resemblance to the character used and in other particulars can, however, be traced. There is less difference between old French and modern French than between ancient Greek and modern Greek. You write a good plain hand.

C. W.—A husband cannot use physical force to compel his wife to return to him. He can, however, institute a suit for the restitution of conjugal rights, when the wife must obey the order of the court or submit to the consequences. By remaining away from your husband you forfeit all claim to maintenance at his hands. If the annoyance amounts to a breach of the peace, a magistrate will bind the offender to keep the peace.

EDINBURGH.—A clerk proceeding to Calcutta or Bombay would not be likely to procure a situation at once. That is, if he went merely on speculation without any letters of introduction. There are, of course, clerks and clerks. That is, the personal appearance and qualifications of one man would ensure him preference over another. But even if your qualifications are very high, it would be a hazardous experiment to make "on chance." You should be prepared to wait some months after landing, and during the waiting time you must take care that you do not degenerate. You require introductions and good certificates of character. The handwriting is very good.

NO SIGNATURE.—The spire of Salisbury Cathedral is 404 feet high. It has recently been under repair. The old spire of Chichester Cathedral was 300 feet high. It fell, however, in 1891, and a new one has recently been erected. Both cathedrals are very ancient. The date of that at Salisbury is 1258, and Chichester was built in the same century.

BOUTON D'OR.—A mixture of equal parts of carbonate of magnesia and precipitated sulphur may be serviceable to the complexion. The dose is a small teaspoonful in a little milk before breakfast. Exuberance of hair is constitutional, and is indicative of strength. The prominence of the vein you refer to denotes a lively and earnest disposition.

LIEBEN J.—The tomatoes selected must be ripe and red. Take away their stalks, cut the fruit in half, squeeze the water and seeds out, then put the only stew-pan with a capicum, and two or three spoonfuls of beef-gravy. Set them on a slow stove till they melt, rub them through a sieve into another stew-pan, add pepper and salt, and let them simmer a short time. In bottling add some Tarragon vinegar.

PIERCE AND HIS BROTHER.—Your philosophy is wrong. The first consideration with a rogue is how to help himself, and the second how to do it with an appearance of helping you. Dionysius, the tyrant, stripped the statue of Jupiter Olympus of a robe of massive gold, and substituted a cloak of wool, saying: "Gold is too cold in winter and too heavy in summer; it behoves us to take care of Jupiter"—an apology made by most superior (?) knaves.

J. ROKWOOD.—There is some intricacy about the case you send us. We should require a more minute knowledge of the circumstances before we could give an opinion. Possibly the man may have made himself liable to third parties for board, education, &c.; if so, he would be bound to the extent of his contract. It is certain that he seriously assumed a responsibility; we are inclined to think he cannot divest himself of it.

V. C. P.—In the summer time the gymnasiums at Primrose Hill and Battersea Park would suit you. For an indoor gymnasium try Chiosso's, 131, Oxford Street, W. A good way to rise early is to make a resolute mental determination about the matter upon lying down to sleep. An alarm would aid you to form the habit. But it is better to trust to yourself alone. Jump out of bed the instant you awake.

CHARLES JULIAN.—The widow is exempt from all legacy duty upon property inherited from her deceased husband. Your question contains a strange "bull." A man cannot leave his property to his widow as you say, "without a will." If there be no will the widow only takes a third or a half, the amount of her share depending upon whether or not there be issue of the marriage. The portion of the property which she does not take goes to the children or the next of kin as the case may be.

OUR SWORDS ARE SHEATHED.

Our swords are sheathed,
The flag droops idly down,
Our shields are laurel-wreathed—
There's peace in bower and town.
But should a foreign tyrant
Insult us where we stand,
Or foes invade, we'll draw the blade,
And sweep them from the land.
Bless'd are our swords, if justice
Has made them keen and strong,
But shame shall be their portion
Who battle in the wrong.
So, let them come—we care not—
'Tis freedom makes us strong;
And shame shall be their portion
Who battle in the wrong!

C. M.

JESSIE BEAUCHAMP.—1. White satin can be cleaned by a mixture of stale bread crumbs and powdered blue; rub the mixture over the satin, and afterwards take it off by dusting the satin with a clean white handkerchief. 2. Half-an-hour's walk before breakfast will prove serviceable to you. You should accomplish a mile at least in that time. 3. You write very nicely. Your style will become more free by practice. 4. There is very little difference in the shades of colour of the hair. It is brown.

K. F.—In striving to overcome the self-will of a child, the parent should be quite certain that some other emotion be not mistaken for it. An error committed in this respect would result in lasting injury. And it should be remembered that much in the actions and demeanour of a child may bear the aspect of wilful obstinacy and rebellion, which may possibly proceed from totally different causes, such as fear, ignorance, misunderstanding, or physical inability.

A DAUGHTER.—Two things are necessary to a person wishing to enter the profession concerning which you have addressed us. They are a natural aptitude, and the necessary means to obtain suitable instruction. If you possess these qualifications your age is no obstacle. You must first select the instructor you would prefer, and then commence to take lessons. To succeed you must be very industrious, patient, persevering, and steady. 2. Your handwriting would be improved by constant daily practice.

J. P.—The difference between talent and genius is this: The former is the result of careful cultivation; the latter is spontaneous, natural, and might say innate, just as instinct is in animals. It, however, requires careful cultivation to be well developed, and become useful to its possessor and beneficial to mankind. Talent married to genius makes the demigods, whose footsteps on the sands of time are never obliterated. Talent by itself is strong common sense, practical mediocrity; but it is the main prop of the moral and social fabric.

UNE PAUVRE FEMME.—Under the circumstances detailed by you a divorce cannot be obtained. Moral right is doubtless with you, but legally you are on the wrong side of the divide. The only course to be pursued is for the lady in question to ouster you as quietly and softly as she can. If she can meet with a true friend so much the better. When any disturbance or annoyance occurs, it will be best for her resolutely and without delay to tell her tale to a magistrate, who will, at all events, take care that she is not molested in her situation.

S. HAUSER.—We are not aware that anything of the nature to which you refer occurred during the visit of the Prince and Princess of Wales to Constantinople. ACROSS.—Pride in a woman is an excellent quality, but it should not be carried to excess. Maidenly pride is essentially different from that haughty which would repel and keep both friends and foes at a distance. Prudery is not pride, neither is timidity. Womanly pride is that quality in her nature which would scorn deception, admire candour, and entertain a pure and exalted estimate of herself. It is rather understood than made known by outward manifestations. A woman so gifted is sure to be respected by all who know her, and in her circle loved and adored.

A. B. (Abingdon).—We suppose you wish for an assisted passage to America. Assisted passages to the United States and Canada are not granted either by the English, American, or Colonial governments. Of the many societies instituted to aid emigrants, there are none to send boys out apart from their families, except those institutions in which boys have been trained from their early years. If you can find anyone in your neighbourhood who is about to emigrate to a colony wherein you would like to settle, it would be a good plan for you to hire yourself, with the consent of your parents, to such an individual. In default of this you must wait a bit, earn some money here and save something every week. Then by-and-by you can pay your own passage and outfit to the colony you prefer.

IS TROUBLE.—Although our views are unfavourable to marriage at the age you mention, we cannot gainsay the opinions of family and friends. You say they are favourable to the match, that is a very good omen. We do not think much of the discrepancy in years. From the tone of your note we suggest that it will promote your happiness to be married at your parish church. We have only one caution to give and that is, "don't marry merely for the sake of getting out of a difficulty." Many that have done so have only increased their troubles. Meet the difficulty at which you hint cheerfully and bravely on its own ground. Neither shrink from it nor be ashamed to seek help to grapple with it. Marry not for ease but for love, and because your sons tell you that such companionship for life will be good for both of you. The many other questions contained in your letter will find an answer in his loving, tender heart, about whom you write.

A CONSTANT READER.—We are almost tired of asking correspondents to address us by any other signature than this. However, we proceed to answer your queries. 1. The matter you speak of could not have been a part of the Bible properly so-called. It must have been some commentary, bound up with the Book of Books. Many celebrated authors have written on unfulfilled prophecy, or events yet to happen, consequently it is impossible for us to say upon which of these authors' works your eye glanced. We can recommend you a little shilling volume published by the Tract Society—name, "Fleming on Prophecy." 2. Your second question is in strange contrast with the first; notwithstanding, here is the reply: Guarantee Societies are associations which in consideration of certain annual payments contract to pay a defined sum in the event of the person for whom they become surety failing to perform the duty specified in the agreement. The Guarantee Society's address is 19, Birch Lane, London, E.C.

LETTY, seventeen, dark, short, a good pianist, and domesticated. Respondent must be 5 ft. 10 in., fair, twenty-six, and very loving.

D. E., a gentleman of good position, in his twentieth year, wishes to correspond with a lady of similar age. Objection to blondes; money no object. *Cartes de visite* solicited.

BESSIE W., medium height, blue eyes, light hair, and fair complexion. Respondent must be tall, dark, and good looking; a sailor preferred. Would like to exchange *cartes de visite*.

JENNY A., nineteen, medium height, brown eyes, dark hair, and good complexion. Respondent must be tall, dark, and good looking; a mechanic preferred. Would like to exchange *cartes de visite*.

FAITH, HOPE, AND CHARITY. "F ith," twenty-five, tall, fair, and fond of home. Respondent must possess good sound principles. "H ope," twenty-one, medium height, fair, and fond of music. "C harity," seventeen, tall, fair, and fond of home. Respondent must be a member of the Church of England.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

HETTA is responded to by—"J. H. Wilson," twenty-two, 5 ft. 7 in., dark, and a lookkeeper.

J. T. by—"Amy," seventeen, rather fair, medium height, and domesticated. Wishes for *cartes de visite*.

J. J. by—"H. T. C.," seventeen, pretty, brown hair, blue eyes, cheerful, affectionate, and a good songstress. Wishes to exchange *cartes de visite*.

of T. by—"Hetty B.," seventeen, fair, blue eyes, good complexion, and is good tempered, pretty, and accomplished. Hetty desires to exchange *cartes*.

CARRY by "L. D.," twenty-three, medium height, dark, good looking, good tempered, and in good circumstances. Would like to exchange *cartes de visite*.

LOUISA by—"S. H.," twenty-six, tall, dark, well off, and has good expectations. Would like to exchange *cartes de visite*.

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